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POLL RESULTS

Do you intend to participate in the 24th Annual Red Cross Walkathon on Saturday, March 27?

Yes	53
No	34
Undecided	15

Sunday, March 14, 2010

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You might not recognize Stephanie Courtney even if you were riding in an elevator with her.

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"Hardly anything is done from 7:30am to 8:30am; by cutting work hours, that will help save government money." —Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos

7-hour govt workday pushed

ECO KARNIVAL HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Cultural dance performers entertain the crowd at the Eco Karnival, hosted by the Saipan Community School, at the Kilili Beach Park in Susupe on Saturday morning to afternoon.

» 8:30am to 4:30pm daily hours eyed for govt agencies

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The House Ways and Means Committee and the Fitial administration are now pushing for a seven-hour workday for the government—from 8:30am to 4:30—after projected revenue for Fiscal Year 2010 was revised to $137 million and days after a controversial austerity bill was thumbed down in the House of Representatives.

See 7-HOUR on Page 4

WSR's Alcantara wins regional spelling bee

» 6th grader advances to national competition

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

For 11-year-old Mikhail Alcantara, the word "decoupage" became his ticket to this year's national Scripps Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. in June.

Alcantara, a sixth grader at the William S. Reyes Elementary School, spelled the word correctly to best 58 other top

See ALCANTARA on Page 4

This year's regional top speller, Mikhail Alcantara, center, poses with his mother Ligaya, right, teacher Anthony Taylor, left, and the competition's pronouncer, Jon Anderson, back, after Saturday's final round of the contest. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Babauta defends Brown

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Babauta

Interior Assistant Secretary Tony Babauta has defended Federal Ombudsman Pamela Brown's statements at a forum where she stated, among other things, that the Department of Labor lost its authority to revoke umbrella permits when the federalization law took effect

See BABAUTA on Page 4

Q&A Employment rules under federal law

The U.S. Customs and Immigration Service answers common questions employers and workers may have about employment authorization and verification under federal immigration law, particularly with respect to so-called "umbrella permits."

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OAG, NMC to tackle findings in Fernandez's case today. PAGE 3

Fitial moves trip after Obama delays Guam visit. PAGE 6

JEWELRY AUCTION
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Local

PSS stops solar project in San Vicente

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Public School System has stopped a solar project at the San Vicente Elementary School, even though the undertaking has a valid construction permit from the Department of Public Works.

Valrick Welch, aquaculture science project manager, said during Friday's special Board of Education meeting, that PSS cited three reasons when it issued the verbal stop order: the board and the Education commissioner were not informed of the project; PSS lost the documents related to the project and wanted copies; and the project was not presented to the board's Capital Improvement Project Committee.

Saipan Tribune learned that the stop order was issued on Feb. 4.

Welch pointed out, though, that this is not a new project. It was initiated in 1997 as part of the school's aquaculture project and was funded by the National Science Foundation, with a donation from the Bank of Hawaii. He said it was approved by the late Education Commissioner, Dr. Rita H. Inos, former San Vicente principal Martha Habergman, and PSS architects.

A typhoon later damaged the aquaculture area, making it unsafe for student activities, Welch said. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and a local Boy Scouts team restored the area but the lack of funding to replace pumps and to provide adequate security, along with new PSS rules on the use of power, made restarting the aquaculture science program impossible, he added.

In 2008, Welch said, a request for ANA funding to renovate and restore the San Vicente facility was approved. Included in the request for funding was a letter from then Education Commissioner Dr. David Borja, who supported the project. The first renovation included adding an office and storage area next to the library and the permission was granted through the authorizing signature of David Loan, who resigned from PSS last year. Local permits were also secured and authorized for the project.

Saipan Tribune learned that ANA approved the funding on Sept. 30, 2008, but permission to start work was not granted until January 2009. Welch said the permission was delayed over concerns that the current Education commissioner, Dr. Rita A. Sablan, and the new Board of Education were not aware of the project.

On Dec. 22 last year, Welch said, a request to present the project to the Education Board was made and the matter was referred to the CIP committee.

Because of the stop order, Welch said the request for proposal for the solar power project was cancelled on Feb. 5. Due to this, Welch asked for an emergency meeting with the CIP committee on Feb. 18. There has been no response yet from PSS, he said.

Welch, along with Parents Teachers School Association Council president Juan Sablan, asked the board on Friday to reconsider the stop order. They asked for written permission to proceed with the solar project and for the matter to be placed on the CIP committee's agenda.

They described the undertaking as a "beautiful project" that would help students.

Board member Herman T. Guerrero pointed out that the board supports the project but needs full details to ensure safety and safeguard PSS from any liability.

Board chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita referred the matter to Education Commissioner Sablan, who said she plans to call a meeting for all parties involved.

Suspect in fatal assault to appear in court today

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Shane Jonathan Hocog, the suspect in the fatal assault on a jobless man in Kagman, is expected to appear in the Superior Court today, Monday.

Hocog

The preliminary hearing in Hocog's case is set for today at 9am.

During a preliminary hearing, a judge must determine whether there is probable cause that a crime was committed and if there is enough evidence to require a trial. It follows the filing of a criminal complaint by the prosecution.

The CNMI government is expected to file the charging information against the 22-year-old Hocog before today's hearing.

Police arrested Hocog on March 4 after witnesses identified him as the person who assaulted Larry Gonzales near the Kagman High School on March 1. Police arrested Hocog on charges of voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault and battery, and assault and battery.

Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo imposed a $100,000 cash bail and several conditions for his temporary liberty.

Gonzales, a 37-year-old Filipino, was pronounced dead by a doctor at the Commonwealth Health Center on March 4 at 4:45pm due to severe head injury. He had been in coma since being taken to CHC on March 1.

The autopsy conducted by Guam chief medical examiner Aurelio Espinola indicated that the 37-year-old Gonzales died due to brain contusion and laceration.

The Philippine Consulate General told *Saipan Tribune* Friday that Gonzales' body will be repatriated to Oriental Mindoro, the Philippines on Wednesday.

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OAG, NMC to tackle findings in Fernandez's case

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents is expected to decide the fate of suspended NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez today after the results of the investigation against her are turned over to the board.

Board chair Janet Han King said the Office of the Attorney General will turn over the results of its investigation on Fernandez today during the board's special meeting.

Fernandez was suspended two months ago due to alleged unauthorized changing of students' grades and other personnel issues.

"The AG indicated that the report is completed and will be transmitted officially to the BOR on Monday, March 15. We have set up a special meeting to receive the report and to act on it," King told *Saipan Tribune*.

Attorney General Edward Buckingham confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* Friday that he will attend today's board meeting to hand in a full report on the allegations.

The OAG and the board conducted separate investigations on the issue after Fernandez's suspension on Jan. 12.

King pointed out that they will decide based on the results of the probe, and this may include reinstating Fernandez to her post.

"At that time, the BOR will vote to act on the report and, based on its contents, the option includes reinstating Dr. Fernandez. It's up to the vote of the seven-member Board of Regents," she said.

In a statement issued Friday, NMC indicated that all regents would be present in today's meeting.

"A quorum of the seven members of the Board of Regents shall make that decision. As far as I know, all the members are expected to show up to this very important meeting. A member who does not show up would only be absent for extenuating circumstances; however, no Regent has informed me that he or she will not be present on Monday. The matters at hand are too important for any Regent to remain absent," King said.

Having not seen or reviewed the OAG report yet, King said it is premature to comment on what the outcomes will be after it is reviewed.

Nonetheless, she said the board wants to emphasize that it plans to act expeditiously and does not intend to prolong the matter.

"It is committed to ensuring all parties' rights are protected and due process is provided," King added.

Fernandez was hired in 2007 for $80,000 per annum and an $800 monthly housing allowance. Despite her suspension, she is still receiving her salary, as per college policy.

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Another 10-cent hike in Shell's gas prices

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Shell Marianas increased the pump prices of all its gasoline products by 10 cents a gallon yesterday morning, marking the second round of price hikes on Saipan this year.

The first 10-cent a gallon hike this year was on Jan. 8 for Shell and Jan. 9 for Mobil Oil Marianas.

As of 5:30pm, Mobil's gasoline prices remained unchanged, although the two oil giants mirror each other's price changes.

At Shell service stations, regular, self-serve unleaded gasoline is now $3.779 a gallon, while full-serve is now 3.909 a gallon.

Shell V-Power/premium, self-serve gasoline now costs $4.099 a gallon, while self-serve is now $4.299 a gallon.

Diesel is now $3.949 a gallon after the 10-cent increase.

Since February 2009, Saipan motorists have seen nine rounds of pump price increases. This means that for the 13-month period, motorists have paid an additional $1.05 for every gallon of gas they put in their tanks.

Shell and Mobil also do not issue advance notice of price increases. Saipan motorists know about such price changes by the price displays at gasoline service stations.

A Shell Marianas service station display shows the new pump prices of self-serve regular and V-Power gasoline, which increased by 10 cents a gallon yesterday morning.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

ALCANTARA

From Page 1

spellers from Guam, Palau, and the Commonwealth in Saturday's regional Scripps Spelling Bee in Guam.

His victory earned him the right to represent the Marianas region in the national competition.

Saipan Tribune learned that Mikhail, the son of Jerry and Ligaya Alcantara, has been preparing for the contest since he won the schoolwide spelling bee in January. He flew to Guam Friday with his mother and sixth grade teacher and coach Tony Taylor.

This year marks Alcantara's fourth trip to the Guam contest. He was WSR's spelling champion in third grade and won runner-up honors in his fourth and fifth grades.

In an interview from Guam, the top speller expressed satisfaction with his win.

"It feels really good!" he told *Saipan Tribune,* admitting that he felt nervous throughout the six competition rounds.

Mikhail successfully made it to the final round where he sealed his victory with the word "decoupage," a word of French origin that means the technique of decorating a surface with cutouts, as of paper.

"I was so nervous because I knew I am competing with the smartest students from other schools. I guess I was lucky yesterday," said Alcantara.

His trip on June 2 to the national competition will mark his first participation in a national contest. He vows to do his best for the region. "I will try my best and will go for the top," he said.

Alcantara dedicated his Saturday victory to his parents, whom he described as his "lucky charms."

Alcantara is WSR's Student Council president, class president, and a consistent honor student. Besides spelling bee, he is also actively involved in other academic competitions.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

William S. Reyes Elementary School's Mikhail Tecson Alcantara smiles after being declared overall champion in the Scripps Spelling Bee in Guam last Saturday. The sixth grader will advance to the national competition in Washington, D.C. in June.

The sixth grader said he wants to become a lawyer and a doctor when he grows up. He is convinced that involvement in school activities and competitions would develop his personality and enhance his knowledge as a student.

To prepare for the D.C. competition, Alcantara said he will continue to study the origin of words and review the materials provided for the contest.

According to his father, the 11-year-old boy showed dedication and commitment in preparing for the Guam competition, spending a few hours daily to prepare for it.

"We're very proud of our son. With his sacrifices and hard work for this competition, I knew he can make it!" said Jerry Alcantara, adding that the family will continue to support the child's future endeavors.

To motivate his son, he said the family rewards Mikhail every time he brings home such achievements.

Last year, a student from Marianas Baptist Academy—Se Young Hwang—won the Guam regional competition.

This year, Alcantara will compete with about 200 best spellers from the different states and territories in the 83rd Annual Scripps Spelling National Spelling Bee.

According to WSR principal Lynnette Villagomez, Alcantara's win is also a victory for the CNMI Public School System.

"We are ecstatic and very excited because we have been sending students every year, and we really look forward to preparing students not only to compete with fellow students at WSR but at the regional as well. And winning the regional competition is a huge success on our part and to everyone who were involved," said Villagomez.

"We are going to prepare very hard to help prepare Mikhail in the nationals. We are confident as our students have always performed very well," Villagomez said.

This is the first time WSR will send a student to the national contest.

The regional competition is open to both private and public schools and each school winner is selected through in-school competitions. The nationals in June will be aired on television.

BABAUTA

From Page 1

on Nov. 28, 2009.

As this developed, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services issued this weekend a guidance memorandum that also supports Brown's statements on umbrella permits and alien employment issues. ***(See complete guidance on Pages 14 and 15.)***

In a statement issued Saturday, Babauta said that prior to the forum, he and Brown discussed the issues in great detail with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to ensure a consensus between their departments on the implementation of federal and local labor laws.

Babauta said he is confident the guidance provided by DHS were properly expressed by Brown during the forum held March 4 at the American Memorial Park amphitheater. "I am further encouraged that in the very near future, the DHS will issue its guidance on employing aliens in the Northern Marianas," Babauta said.

The forum was intended to educate the public on the impact of Public Law 110-229 on employing aliens in the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Interior official was apparently prompted to issue the statement after noting the critical statements made by the CNMI Labor Department against Brown for the guidance she provided at the forum.

In a recent meeting with local lawmakers, Kaipat had said that Brown is "acting recklessly" and is only creating confusion among employers and employees.

Babauta said, though, that the information Brown conveyed at the forum, together with the forthcoming DHS guidance, "will provide a greater measure of clarity to the CNMI government, local employers, and aliens." ***(See complete statement on Page 13.)***

In a document released this weekend, the USCIS answered common questions employers and workers may have about employment authorization and verification under federal immigration law, particularly the umbrella permits.

The USCIS echoed Brown's statements that the employment of aliens in the CNMI is now a matter of federal law.

However, it said, for a two-year period following the Nov. 28, 2009 transition to federal immigration law, federal law authorizes aliens to work based on the employment authorization they had received under CNMI law as of the transition date.

CIS also agreed with Brown that even if CNMI authorities revoke a holder's umbrella permit, the holder remains authorized to work under federal law until Nov. 27, 2011.

7-HOUR

From Page 1

At present, government work hours are from 7:30am to 4:30am.

However, the Fitial administration and the House Ways and Means Committee, through its chairman Rep. Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan) differ on the duration of the one-hour work cut.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, in an interview on Saturday, said the administration wants work hours to be reduced by one hour every morning from Monday to Friday.

"That's [because] hardly anything is done from 7:30am to 8:30am, and by cutting work hours, that will help save government money," Inos told *Saipan Tribune* on Saturday at the Eco-Karnival at the Kilili Beach Park in Susupe.

The Fitial administration's proposal will reduce the work hours from 80 to 70 per payday.

Basa, in a phone interview yesterday, said the committee is only looking at Monday to Thursday for the reduced work hours, and a full eight-hour work day on Fridays.

His proposal will reduce the per payday work hours to 72—a 10 percent cut on regular hours.

The austerity bill killed at the House on Thursday essentially proposed a similar cut. However, any austerity bill can still be re-introduced.

"I will reintroduce a bill and I hope it's a better one because it has the consensus of members and agencies. We really need to cut our expenditures," Basa said.

He said he may pre-file his bill today, for inclusion in the next House session's agenda.

House Minority Leader Rep. Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) expressed apprehension about the new proposal.

"It still cuts income and does not solve [the] overall deficit," he said.

But Basa said his new proposal does not try to solve the entire problem.

"This is just to help with the cash flow problem," he said.

On Thursday, some 30 parents and school administrators and other education officials took turns asking House members not to pass Basa's House Bill 17-22, which would have reduced government work hours from 80 to 72 every pay day and implemented unpaid legal holidays.

The Public School System, for example, said they stand to lose some $47.5 million in federal grants by implementing the proposed austerity measure among schools, while Northern Marianas College said the proposal would negatively affect their accreditation.

The bill was projected to save the government some $4.2 million for the rest of Fiscal Year 2010.

The committee report and the bill's defeat came two days after Fitial wrote to House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) and Senate Pres. Paul Manglona, informing them of an immediate across-the-board 7.25 percent cut in the current budget of CNMI government agencies and offices, with the revision of projected revenues for FY 2010 to just $137 million.

Fitial expressed disappointment with the killing of Basa's austerity bill, given the gravity of the government's financial problems.

But Republican House members said there are other ways to cut the budget shortfall, including not funding non-essential government offices for the remainder of the fiscal year, and moving those funds to critical services like health, education and public safety. They also called on for desk audit to determine whether the government is indeed bloated as perceived. Republicans also asked for a budget summit, to get the input of all sectors of the community on how to solve the government's financial woes.

The original estimated resource for FY 2010 was $150.500 million, with $148,083,551 to be spent for government operations.

Due to a projected decline in revenue, Fitial adjusted this amount to $137,350,000, representing a 7.25 percent reduction that he said "must be absorbed by the budget authority remaining for the fiscal year."

WALTER J. SUTHERLAND

American Red Cross executive director John Hirsch and Benjamin Kennedy accept the Pro Patria award during Saturday night's Guam-CNMI Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve awards banquet at the Saipan World Resort.

WALTER J. SUTHERLAND

From left, representatives of Joeten Enterprises, Northern Marianas College, and the Division of Environmental Quality accept gift baskets and their Above and Beyond Awards during Saturday night's Guam-CNMI Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve awards banquet at the Saipan World Resort.

ESGR honors 10 CNMI employers in annual gala

By WALTER SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Guam-CNMI Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve honored 10 local employers and one special service member from the CNMI during the committee's first employer awards banquet dinner at the World Resort on Saturday.

The ESGR committee conferred its most prestigious honor, the national Pro Patria Award, to the American Red Cross NMI Chapter, in recognition of its exceptional support for national defense by adopting policies that make it easier for their employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserve.

"Pro Patria" translates to "For the country," which symbolizes uncommon patriotism by an employer.

The CNMI Division of Environmental Quality, the Northern Marianas College, and Joeten Enterprises won the Chairman's Above and Beyond Awards, which are given to employers who have gone above and beyond the requirements of the United Services Employment and Reemployments Rights Act of 1994. These recipients were personally selected by State chair Benny Paulino.

The CNMI Public School System, Department of Public Safety, the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Saipan Hollywood Theaters, Saipan Stevedore Co. Inc., and POI Aviation all won the Most Supportive Employer Award. These awards are given by employee servicemembers who nominate their employers for outstanding support and patronage for the employees' military services.

Saturday night's gala also featured Staff Sgt. Noel Chargualaf from the U.S. Army Reserve Marianas being honored with the Seven Seals Award, a national level award for significant achievement in promoting ESGR objectives over a sustained period of time.

Maj. Gen. Steven D. Tom, chief of staff for the U.S. Pacific Command, was present as the keynote guest speaker for the event. The Pacific Winds Band provided dinner entertainment.

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Fitial moves trip after Obama delays Guam visit

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has rescheduled his trip to Guam—at least until this weekend or early next week—after President Barack Obama delayed his Thursday visit to Guam in a bid to shore up support in the U.S. Senate for his health care reform package.

Obama was originally set to go to Guam with first lady Michelle Obama and their daughters Malia and Sasha on March 18, on his way to Indonesia and Australia. The president is now not expected to arrive in Guam at least until Sunday or Monday, and the family will not be accompanying him on his trip.

Guam Gov. Felix P. Camacho personally invited Fitial to Guam for the presidential visit, and Fitial accepted the invitation.

Press secretary Angel Demapan separately said yesterday that new updates indicate that Obama will leave Washington, D.C. on March 21 (March 22, Monday, in the Marianas). There is no final date yet as to when Obama will arrive in Guam.

Demapan said details of Fitial's trip will be discussed when the administration gets the president's finalized schedule.

It is also not known yet who will accompany Fitial to Guam when he goes there.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, in an interview Saturday morning, said he will not be going with Fitial to Guam but will remain in the CNMI. As provided by law, Inos serves as acting governor when Fitial is off island.

Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo, in a statement on Friday, said Obama will stay in Washington, D.C. throughout this week to help pass health care reform.

Both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate are set to begin debate on health care reform legislation this week.

"The President decided to delay his departure for the final effort to pass health care reform legislation. The White House has not released any new details of the President's visit to Asia, but I have been assured by White House staff that the President is still intending to visit Guam. Health care reform is one of President Obama's top legislative priorities and I know that once this very difficult work is done he will certainly appreciate the warm welcome that he will receive on Guam," Bordallo said in a statement.

Bordallo was the first Marianas official to announce Obama's visit to Guam.

The CNMI House and Senate had passed separate resolutions inviting Obama to also visit the CNMI when he comes to Guam. The CNMI is only about 30 minutes away by air from Guam. The White House has so far not released any word on these resolutions.

CNMI Public School System students have been writing letters and preparing postcards inviting Obama to come to the CNMI.

Betty Miller, the coordinator for the "Postcards for the President Campaign," said public school students have until March 31, 2010, to turn in their postcards or letters.

Miller, who is the vice principal of San Vicente Elementary School and adviser for the SVES Student Council, said the target is to send to the White House at least 10,000 postcards or letters from PSS students by April.

The postcards campaign is a joint project between PSS and Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP).

If and when Obama visits the CNMI, he will be the first sitting U.S. president to ever set foot in the CNMI.

The highest ranking U.S. official to set foot in the CNMI's capital of Saipan is former President George H.W. Bush, when he was still vice president to former President Ronald Reagan. Bush flew to Saipan on his way to a six-day visit to China in October 1985.

CNMI lawmakers said it will be a "great honor" and an "extraordinary privilege" to have Obama pay an official visit to the CNMI while he is in the region.

They said a presidential visit will bring to the fore issues critical to the CNMI, including the recent federalization of its immigration, the military buildup in Guam that will also impact the CNMI, and the creation of the Marianas Trench National Monument and the authorization for a visitor center in the region.

'Ice' trafficking suspect wants US govt sanctioned

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A drug trafficking suspect has asked the federal court to sanction the U.S. government for allegedly failing to produce an adequate written summary of its drug expert witness.

Bruce Berline, lawyer for Roque Norita, said that, on Nov. 20, 2009, the U.S. government provided Norita with the government's notice of intent to present expert testimony.

Berline said the notice had no written summary setting forth the bases and reasons for the expert witness' opinions.

"As required by Rule 16(a)(I)(G), a written summary of testimony must describe the expert witnesses' opinions, the bases and the reasons there for, and the witnesses' qualifications," the lawyer said.

He argued that the U.S. government's failure to comply with the Rule is sanctionable.

Berline asked the U.S. District Court to stop the government's drug expert from testifying due to the prosecution's refusal to comply with the Rule's requirements.

In the alternative, he said, the court must order the government to immediately produce a detailed and complete written summary of its expert drug witness' testimony, including the bases and reasons for the expert's opinion.

"Moreover, the court should make it clear to the government that any delay in producing such summary will result in exclusion of witnesses or dismissal of the case," he said.

If the government complies with the court order, Berline said, then the court should grant a continuance of the trial if the defense asks for one and allow pre-trial motions.

The U.S. government has charged Norita with one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance, two counts of distribution and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance, and one count of use of a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime.

The U.S. government also indicted Norita on three charges of a felon in possession of a firearm.

The 41-year-old Norita pleaded not guilty to all charges.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-CHC-077

SUBMISSION: APRIL 09, 2010 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"RADIOLOGICAL SERVICES AND TENANCY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTH CENTER"

COPIES OF THE RFP PACKAGE MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 26, 2010 AT 10:00 A.M. AT THE SECRETARY'S OFFICE, LOCATED AT THE DR. JOST T. VILLAGOMEZ BUILDING, LOWER NAVY HILL. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO MR. PETE T. UNTALAN, MHA ACTING DEPTY SECRETARY FOR HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION BY FAX TO: (670) 234-8930 OR E-MAILED TO health1@pticom.com NO LATER THAN MARCH 30, 2010 CLOSE OF BUSINESS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH PROPOSAL IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ JOSEPH K.P. VILLAGOMEZ
SECRETARY OF HEALTH

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-DOC-072

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 23, 2010 TIME: 10:00 A.M.
OPENING DATE: APRIL 23, 2010 TIME: 1:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF FOUR LUBE OIL SEPARATORS FOR POWER PLANT 1, SAIPAN, CNMI"

COPIES OF THE ITB PACKAGE MAY BE PICKED –UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ONLY ONE WALKTHROUGH WILL BE CONDUCTED AT THE POWR PLANT, LOWER BASE, SAIPAN, CNMI ON APRIL 9, 2010 STARTING AT 10:30 A.M.

THIS IS AN AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 PROJECT AND AS SUCH, ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED MUST BE MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/S/ MICHAEL ADA
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

/S/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
ACTING SECRETARY OF DPW

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-DOC-073

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 23,2010 TIME: 10:00 A.M.
OPENING DATE: APRIL 23, 2010 TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF NEW TURBOCHARGES AS RETROFIT UNITS FOR ENGINES #5-8 POWER PLANT 1, SAIPAN, CNMI"

COPIES OF THE ITB PACKAGE MAY BE PICKED –UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ONLY ONE WALKTHROUGH WILL BE CONDUCTED AT THE POWR PLANT, LOWER BASE, SAIPAN, CNMI ON APRIL 9, 2010 STARTING AT 9:00 A.M.

THIS IS AN AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 PROJECT AND AS SUCH, ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED MUST BE MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/S/ MICHAEL ADA
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

/S/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
ACTING SECRETARY OF DPW

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-DOC-026

CLOSING DATE: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2010 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"GUMA HUSTISIA AIR CONDITIONING RETROFIT"

COPIES OF THE PROPOSAL CAN BE OBTAINED AT THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE - CNMI ARRA OFFICE, 1ST FLOOR CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A MANDATORY PRE-PROPOSAL WALKTHROUGH WILL BE CONDUCTED AT THE GUMA HUSTISIA ON THURSDAY, MARCH 18TH, 2010 BEGINNING AT 9:00AM.

THIS IS AN AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 PROJECT AND AS SUCH ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED MUST BE MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE IT IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW.

/s/ MICHAEL ADA
Secretary of Commerce

/s/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
Acting Secretary of DPW

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-DOC-027

CLOSING DATE: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2010 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"SENATE CHAMBER AIR CONDITIONING RETROFIT"

COPIES OF THE PROPOSAL CAN BE OBTAINED AT THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE - CNMI ARRA OFFICE, 1ST FLOOR CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A MANDATORY PRE-PROPOSAL WALKTHROUGH WILL BE CONDUCTED AT THE HONORABLE JESUS P. MAFNAS MEMORIAL BUILDING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17TH, 2010 BEGINNING AT 1:30PM.

THIS IS AN AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 PROJECT AND AS SUCH ALL MATERIALS PURCHASED MUST BE MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE IT IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW.

/s/ MICHAEL ADA
Secretary of Commerce

/s/ MARTIN C. SABLAN
Acting Secretary of DPW

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOOD AND BEVERAGE CONCESSION
SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Commonwealth Ports Authority is soliciting proposals from qualified firms and individuals to operate a food and beverage concession at the Saipan International Terminal, Saipan International Airport. Interested firms and individuals are invited to submit proposals for food and beverage services to be offered to the traveling public.

Proposal packages may be obtained at the Office of the Executive Director, located at the Administrative Office of the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Saipan International Airport during regular business hours. A fee of $50.00 shall be charged for a copy of the proposal package. Checks may be payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

All proposals must be received by the Authority at its administrative Office, located at the Saipan International Airport no later than **4:30 on the 19th day of March, 2010** in order to be considered. In evaluating proposals the Authority shall consider the following criteria:

1. Financial standing and capability
2. Management qualifications
3. Capital Investment
4. Proposed Design of Concession Area
5. Food and Beverage to be offered
6. Customer Services, including proposed staffing
7. Pricing of food, beverage, and services offered

The decision on proposals submitted and the award to the successful proposer shall be made within forty-five (45) days of the closing date for receipt of proposals. The Authority reserves the right to reject any and all proposals in accordance with Section 3.2 (7) and 4.1 of its Procurement Rules and Regulations.

Inquiries regarding this Request For Proposals may be addressed to the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan MP 96950.

Dated This 3rd day of March, 2010.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ Edward M. DeLeon Guerrero
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOOD AND BEVERAGE CONCESSION
TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting proposals from qualified firms and/or individuals to operate a food and beverage concession at the Tinian International Airport. Interested firms and/or individuals are encouraged to specify in their proposal the types of products and/or services they intend to offer to the traveling public and how to best use the space available. The area of the space available is 433 square fee, and is centrally located at the Tinian International Airport. This space is available for inspection between 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Proposal packages may be obtained at the Office of the Executive Director, located at the Administrative Office of the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Saipan International Airport during regular business hours and the Office of the Tinian Ports Manager located in the Tinian International Airport. A fee of $50.00 shall be charged for a copy of the proposal package. Checks may be payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

All proposals must be received by the Authority at its administrative Office, located at the Saipan International Airport no later than **4:30 on the 19th day of March, 2010** in order to be considered. In evaluating proposals the Authority shall consider the following criteria:

1. Financial standing and capability
2. Management qualifications
3. Capital Investment
4. Proposed Design of Concession Area
5. Food and Beverage to be offered
6. Customer Services, including proposed staffing
7. Pricing of food, beverage, and services offered

The decision on proposals submitted and the award to the successful proposer shall be made within forty-five (45) days of the closing date for receipt of proposals. The Authority reserves the right to reject any and all proposals in accordance with Section 3.2 (7) and 4.1 of its Procurement Rules and Regulations.

Dated This 3rd day of March, 2010.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ Edward M. DeLeon Guerrero
Executive Director

EMO warns of dangerous surf today

A high surf advisory issued Friday remains in effect until Wednesday this week, with the Emergency Management Office warning yesterday that large trade-wind generated swells may cause surf on east facing reefs to build to hazardous levels today, March 15, 2010.

Based on data received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, a northwest swell generated to the north of a cold front moving southeastward from Japan a few days ago will cause hazardous surf on west and north facing beaches and reefs today.

"Long period northwest swells are combining with large trade-wind swell and wind waves to produce seas of 10 to 11 feet," EMO said in an advisory issued Sunday. "Winds will remain fresh to strong the next few days."

Hazardous surf heights of 7 to 9 feet on west and north facing reefs were expected until yesterday afternoon. A small craft advisory also remains in effect until 3pm Wednesday.

Today, the forecast includes east winds of 20 knots, wind waves of 5 ft. and an east swell of up to 9 ft. Tonight, expect east winds of 20 knots, with gusts of up to 30 knots, wind waves of 4 to 6 ft. and an east swell of up to 9 ft.

EMO is strongly advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those along north and west facing reefs, as rip currents are life threatening. ***(EMO)***

Local student named to nat'l scholars society

Kagman High School student Miki Nadia M. Dela Cruz from Saipan has been selected for membership to the National Society of High School Scholars, according to an announcement issued last week.

The Society recognizes top scholars and invites only those students who have achieved superior academic excellence. The announcement was made by NSHSS founder and chair Claes Nobel, a senior member of the family that established the Nobel Prizes.

"On behalf of NSHSS, I am honored to recognize the hard work, sacrifice, and commitment that Miki Nadia M. Dela Cruz has demonstrated to achieve this exceptional level of academic excellence," said Nobel. "Miki Nadia M. Dela Cruz is now a member of a unique community

Dela Cruz

of scholars—a community that represents our very best hope for the future."

"Our vision is to build a dynamic international organization that connects members with meaningful content, resources, and opportunities," said NSHSS president James Lewis. "We aim to help students like Miki Nadia M. Dela Cruz build on their academic success and enhance the skills and desires to have a positive impact on the global community."

Membership in NSHSS entitles qualified students to enjoy a wide variety of benefits, including scholarship, opportunities, academic competitions, free event, member-only resources, publications, participations in programs offered by educational partners, online forums, personalized recognition items, and publicity honors.

Formed in 2002, the National Society of High School Scholars recognizes academic excellence at the high school level. NSHSS provides scholarship opportunities for deserving young people. For more information about NSHSS, visit www.nshss.org

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
State Board of Education, Public School System

HEAD START PROGRAM
Saipan, Tinian, Rota

START SMART WITH HEAD START!
ENROLL YOUR CHILD TODAY!

WHAT CAN THE CNMI HEAD START PROGRAM OFFER YOUR CHILD?

- Engaging activities and quality instruction led by certified early childhood teachers.
- Services that promote the overall health and well-being of your child, from health and nutrition, to dental care, to mental wellness.
- Beautifully designed facilities that help develop children's motor skills.
- Special education teachers and therapists on hand for children with special needs.

HEAD START PROGRAM REGISTRATION DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Child's birth certificate
- Parents/guardians' verification of income
- Head Start Program Health Exam entrance form(copies are available at all centers/office)
- School Health Entrance certificate
- Social Security card
- Medical insurance (if any)
- Copies of Public Assistance such as Medicaid, WIC, NAP
- Passport/Visa or Immigration Permits (for non-residents)
- Legal guardians notarized documents stipulating the guardianship of child(ren)
- Parents of children w/disabilities are required to bring their child's current IEP/IFSP.

Please be advised that the Head Start Program is a federally funded program that has Eligibility and Selection Criteria. Registering your child does not guarantee automatic enrollment. The program currently enrolls children between the ages of 3 and 4. Children cannot be accepted for enrollment prior to their 3rd birthday.

For more information, please call us at 323 7446 or 322-1739.

It's how the CNMI knows what it needs.

Help the CNMI get our fair share.

IT'S IN OUR HANDS

Census 2010

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

History lecture at AMP draws crowd

More than 100 people attended a local history lecture given by a visiting German professor last Thursday evening at the American Memorial Park Theater.

During a 90-minute lecture, titled " "Micronesians and Germans: Old Ties, new perspectives," Dr. Hermann Hiery provided the standing-room-only crowd a general overview of German colonial activities in the Pacific in the decades immediately preceding World War I.

Hiery noted that German colonial administrators, as a group, were well-educated and had primarily civilian rather than military backgrounds. He contrasted them with German officials in Africa, noting that those who served in the Pacific tended to be more innovative and less rigid in their thinking.

Much of Hiery's lecture focused on the German administration of the Northern Mariana Islands, which ran from 1899 to 1914.

Hiery spent some time detailing the work of District Officer Georg Fritz, who was responsible for running the colonial office on Saipan for the first seven years of German rule.

According to Hiery, Fritz routinely sought the advice of prominent Chamorro businessman Pedro Ada when drafting ordinances and policies that affected the local community.

He also revealed that Fritz arranged for Ada and his wife, Maria, to be granted German citizenship so that Ada could serve as a judge on the colonial court.

Fritz was also credited with promoting the indigenous languages and cultural values, and enacting ordnances intended to protect the islands' natural environment.

German colonial rule came to an abrupt end following the seizure of the islands by Japanese naval forces at the start of World War I. A planned second lecture on this subject by Japanese scholar Yuko Maezawa was cancelled when Maezawa fell ill.

At the conclusion of the lecture, Hiery fielded questions from the audience, which included a number of descendents of Pedro and Maria Ada.

Hiery is the chair of the Department of Modern History at the University of Bayreuth in Germany and has authored a number academic articles and books on Germany's colonial activities in the Pacific.

The event was sponsored by the NMI Council for the Humanities as a part of its ongoing Community Lecture Series, which offers the public presentations on a variety of humanities-based topics. ***(PR)***

Dr. Hermann Hiery poses with descendents of Pedro and Maria Ada.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 15, 1999

Hiring freeze stays despite 3-year limit

Despite protests from the business community, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio said the moratorium on the hiring of non-residents will stay even with the implementation of a controversial law mandating the exit of foreign workers from the Commonwealth after three years of employment. The governor set aside appeals raised by the private sector for reprieve to ease business operations and preserve quality of service, particularly in the hotel industry, saying the measures were intended to encourage employers to hire local residents.

CPA satisfied with $20M bond rating

Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Carlos H. Salas said he is satisfied with the BBB minus rating given by Fitch/IBCA to the $20 million airport bond. The bond rating, which came out on March 9, has at least prevented the current interest rate of 6.25 percent from increasing to 6.70 percent. Salas said this would also entice investors to buy the bonds from current bondholder the Franklin Fund. However, the ports authority is still awaiting the investment grade rating for the $33 million seaport bond. Salas has expressed concern that the delay may have something to do with the projected drop in orders from garment manufacturers here in connection with the $1 billion lawsuit filed by garment workers against manufacturers and buyers.

March 15, 2000

Teno seeks ban on laundry detergents

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has asked the Legislature to enact legislation that will ban the use of laundry detergents containing phosphate in the CNMI to protect the island's fragile ecosystem. House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial said the governor may invoke his authority to issue an executive order that will lead to the ban on importation of these detergent products or the legislative branch can pass a measure. Cheap detergents imported from Asian countries flood the local market as they are very popular among consumers who are in a tight budget. While he did not indicate which products will be vanished from store shelves, Mr. Fitial said the ban is necessary as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has forbidden a long time ago use of detergents with phosphate ingredients.

CNMI protests GTE-Bell Atlantic merger plan

The CNMI government has protested the planned transfer of licenses of GTE Corporation and its subsidiaries to Bell Atlantic Corporation, saying the move would deny local residents access to telecommunications services at rates similar to urban areas in the U.S. mainland. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has petitioned the Federal Communication Commission to deny the application sought by the telephone firms for consent of the transfer. GTE has subsidiary in the Commonwealth -- the Micronesian Telephone Company which is the lone domestic phone service provider on the three main islands of Saipan, Rota and Tinian.

March 15, 2001

CUC faces OPA scrutiny

After getting a beating for cutting power in government offices in Tinian and Rota, the Commonwealth Utilities Commission appears to be headed to another test. The Office of the Public Auditor yesterday revealed that preliminary talks leading to a special audit on the utility company have started. Public Auditor Michael Sablan, however, clarified the special audit has nothing to do whatsoever with the controversy the CUC is now facing. "The audit is something we've been planning for the past months," he said. Sablan said the preliminary meeting was attended by CUC executive director Timothy Villagomez, accompanied by the company's legal counsel and accounting staff.

Customs seize 155lbs of unauthorized medicines

Airport customs confiscated 155 pounds of unauthorized pharmaceutical products from people planing into the CNMI last month. Captain Greg M. Sablan Jr., airport branch manager, also noted that 90 percent of the seized items were from people that came from the People's Republic of China, while the remaining 10 percent came from Korea and the Philippines. Under Public Law 11-40, pharmaceuticals with no English labels are prohibited from entering the CNMI. A waver, however, is given if the pharmaceutical product was brought in for personal use.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP10-DPW-081

SUBMISSION: APRIL 09, 2010 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MATERIAL RECOVERY FACILITY (MRF) LOCATED AT THE LOWER BASE REFUSE STATION"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

INTERESTED PROPOSERS SHOULD SUBMIT ALL QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION IN WRITING TO NO LATER THAN **MARCH 30, 2010, CLOSE OF BUSINESS** TO THE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DIVISION BY FAX TO (670) 322-2762 OR EMAIL AT dpwsolidwaste@pticom.com.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL IF PREFERECED IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **MARTIN C. SABLAN**
ACTING SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB10-DEQ-080

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: APRIL 1, 2010 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY SYSTEM (UPS) AND TWO (2) TRIPP LITE 6-OUTLET LINE CONDITIONERS FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THIS IS A FEDERALY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, ***LOCAL PREFRENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE***, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/s/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
DIRECTOR OF DEQ

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust has scheduled a MPLT Trustees Regular Meeting to be held on Friday, March 19, 2010 beginning at 9:00 AM at the MPLT Conference Room, Suite #107, Morgen Building; Saipan, MP.

The following agenda is hereby established:

I PRELIMINARIES
- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Minutes

II CONSULTANT'S REPORTS
- Investment Consultant Reports
- Loan Administrator Reports
  - o Portfolio Status Update
  - o Default Account Referrals
  - o Payment Re-amortization Schedule
  - o Loan Modifications
- Legal Counsel Reports
  - o Foreclosure Matters
  - o APLE 501 Account Reconciliation
  - o Fiduciary/Providers Legal Memorandum
- Board Consultant Reports
  - o Financial Statements – JAN 2010
  - o Flash Reports – FEB 2010

III OLD BUSINESS
- Local High Yield Investments RFP Review
- Trustee Liability Insurance Update
- Administrative Matters for Review

IV COMMUNICATIONS
- Service Provider Fees Update – Richmond Capital/J.King, Esq.
- Exit Notice – Morgen Ent.
- DPL Meeting Report

V NEW BUSINESS
- FY 2008 Annual Report Review & Approval
- Atalanta Sosnoff – Evercore Announcement
- Senate Legislative Initiative #17-01/17-02
- DPL vs. CNMI (Certified Questions)

VI MISCELLANEOUS

VII ADJOURNMENT

At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body. All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Phillip Mendiola-Long, AIF
Chairman, MPLT Trustees

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
NMHC RFP 2010-001

FROM NMHC'S REGISTERED & APPROVED CONTRACTORS

ASSESSMENT AND REHABILITATION OF ABANDONED/FORECLOSED PROPERTIES
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD Funds.)

CLOSING DATE: MONDAY, April 5, 2010 **TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

PLACE: Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan

Governor Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors through its Chairwoman of the Board, are soliciting competitive sealed proposals from NMHC's Registered and Approved Contractors in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Copies of the proposal package may be obtained at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday through Friday except CNMI holidays.

The procedures for this procurement shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this procurement.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Neighborhood Stabilization Program provided to the Commonwealth. Aside from other governing regulations specified in the Scope of Work, proposers are advised this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts as well as Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968. Proposers are further notified NMHC will affirmatively ensure that in any contracts entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority and women-owned business enterprises (MBE/WBE) are afforded equal opportunity to submit bids and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, religion, gender, age, disability or national origin.

/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Chairwoman of the Board

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement & Supply

NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency

'Study Korea, Experience Korea' at NMC

The Korean Cultural Center is offering comprehensive classes to those who wish to improve their Korean language skills and experience Korean culture as a program of NMC-CDI.

This course contains a beginner's conversational course designed to reinforce the fundamentals of the Korean language. This proficiency-based foreign language course also focuses on developing listening, comprehension, vocabulary, and expressions to be able to communicate in Korean.

The classes will take place from 5pm to 6pm on Wednesdays and Fridays, and 10am to 11am on Saturdays at NMC's As Terlaje campus.

The classes, which are designed to improve individual knowledge and specific skills, are geared around actual workforce needs and experiences based on course surveys, community needs assessments, and interviews with employers.

And participants can learn about the world cultural and textual heritage of Korea—one of the CNMI's important tourism market. The world has witnessed the meteoric rise of the Republic of Korea as a major player on the international stage during the past several decades. There will be presentation time for the breath-taking scenery and diverse climate of Korea, its rich cultural heritage and artistic life, its peace-loving yet passionate populace, and its continuous devotion to the Confucian ideals of filial reverence, social harmony, education, and self-enrichment.

A primary goal of "Study Korea" is to encourage cultural understanding and to provide a site of cultural exchange between Koreans and CNMI residents. You can try on Korean traditional costume and taste homemade folk foods. And you can travel into the history of the Land of Morning Calm. The Korean Cultural Center will present opportunities devoted to diverse aspects of Korean and Korean contemporary culture as well as traditional heritage. The main office is located in Kagman. Contact KCC-KLS president Daniel Huh at 285-2221, e-mail korean2221@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Happy sweet 16th to Lauren Nicole T. Hofschneider on March 16, 2010. Greetings coming from Family, Friends & Hofschneider Engineering, LLC.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

Take my little hand, hold it as I grow,
Teach me all His love, and all that love bestows.
Keep me in your prayers, and your tender care,
Guide me in my faith, encourage me to share.
I know that I am blessed, you're my gift from above,
My protector here on earth, Nino you are loved!
Happy 23rd birthday to my Nino BJ Peter! Hope you enjoy your day! Love from baby Miah-Renisha P. Dela Cruz.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

ZONING BOARD TO HOST VILLAGE MEETINGS

The Zoning Board and Office will hold a round of village meetings to seek comments about how the current zoning law is working, and will update and revise the current zoning law with the goal of addressing the issues and concerns expressed by the community, private sector and the legislature. The public consultation and information campaign over the next two months will continue in order to obtain feedback required to update the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law. Meeting dates and locations which have been confirmed are:

Tuesday, March 9, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Koblerville Village @ Koblerville Youth Center**
Thursday, March 11, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**San Antonio Village @ Hopwood Junior High School Cafeteria**
Thursday, March 18, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Chalan Kanoa & Susupe Village @ WSR Elementary School Cafeteria**
Tuesday, March 23, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Garapan & Gualo Rai Villages @ Garapan Elementary School Cafeteria**
Thursday, March 25, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**San Jose Village @ Oleai Elementary School Cafeteria**
Tuesday, March 30, 2010	**6:00 PM**	**Tanapag Village @ Tanapag Social Hall**

The Board encourages anyone with suggestions that might improve the language of the law, or changes to the zone boundaries to attend. Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the meeting. Written suggestions may also be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30 pm, April 30, 2010 or they may be submitted via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

Anyone with questions about the meetings may contact the Zoning Office by phone at 234-9661 or by e-mail at staff @zoning.gov.mp.

/s/ Herminia M. Fusco, Chairperson

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL CUC-RFP-10-023

Request for Statement of Qualification for Project Manag ment Services

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting statement of qualification from individuals or firms for project management services. The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) has urgent need for various Professional - Project Management Services as related to the utility services. The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") is the CNMI Government's combined power, water and wastewater utility. This is a request for proposals to meet the deliverables of a recent federal consent order regarding the disposal, handling and prevention activities regarding used oil, Stipulated Order #2. The CUC procurement regulations for Architect/Engineer (AIE) Procurement Regulations Title 50 Chapter 50 of the CNMI Administrative Code Paragraph 50-50-305 to publicly announce all requirements for arch architect-engineer services and negotiate contracts on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications at a fair and reasonable price. After public announcement of requirement for A/E services, statements shall be reviewed by CUC, and after discussion, selection shall be made in order of preference of A/E firms to be the most highly qualified to perform the services required. The CUC shall attempt to negotiate a contract with the highest qualified architect-engineer firm at a price determined to be fair and reasonable to CUC. In the event that a fair and reasonable price cannot be negotiated, negotiations shall be terminated and negotiations shall be undertaken with the next highest qualified firm.

The intent is for CUC to procure the services of the most qualified Project Management firm interested in performing a variety of Project Management services in accordance with standard practice including but not limited to construction and repair work, bulk fuel oil transfer, storage and handling in accordance with the applicable codes and regulations including American Petroleum Institute (API), Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), the Clean Water Act (CWA).

Statements of Qualifications will be accepted, reviewed, rated, and ranked by a team of CUC individuals, followed by interviews, as necessary, culminating in the CUC identification of the most qualified firm(s) per CUC procurement regulations.

Details of the Solicitation Notice will be emailed to interested parties upon request, until March 15, 2010 by CUC, Procurement & Supply Division at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, 3' Floor, Room No. 4, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on Government observed holidays.

One (1) original and five (5) copies along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-10-02 3, REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATION FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **Monday, March 22, 2010** at 10:OO AM, local time. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. CUC reserves the right to reject anyor all proposals and wave any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government. All proposals shallbecome the property of CUC.

All inquires must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM local time on **Monday, March 18, 2010** to Mr. Manuel B. Sablan, Jr., Purchasing Officer via email at msablan@cucgov.net, Mr. Robert Lorenz, Water-Wastewater Engineer at email robert_lorenz@cucgov.net, Venu, PG Engineer at venu@cucgov.net.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Acting Executive Director

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
3rd Floor, Joeten Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK, Dandan, Saipan, MP 96950

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT • P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN, MP 96950-1055 • Phone: (670) 237-6500 / Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

Saipan International Airport TSA Office/Restroom Renovations
Project No. CPA-SA-001-10

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals for renovations of office space and a restroom and other improvements at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport which will be occupied by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

An electronic copy of the proposal package including plans and specifications is available at the office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport on **Monday, March 8, 2010**. The proposals shall include the following:

- Letter of Interest;
- Project timeframe;
- Available resources to accomplish project;
- Cost Proposal in itemized scope of work format (see proposal form in specifications);
- Valid CNMI Business License; and
- Proof of insurance.

All proposals shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: ***"Proposal for TSA Office/Restroom Renovations, Project Number CPA-SA-001-10"***. The proposal must be submitted no later than **Friday, March 19, 2010, 4:30 p.m.,** to the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, at the Saipan International Airport.

A pre-proposal conference will be held at *9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 15, 2010* at the CPA Airport Conference Room. Attendance at this pre-proposal conference is mandatory and only contractors present at the pre-proposal meeting will be permitted to submit proposals.

Each proposal shall be accompanied by a bid bond issued by a CPA approved surety company, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount no less than ten percent (10%) of the total proposal amount. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Project is being financed partially by funds from the Transportation Security Administration and CPA. The contract award, if it is to be made, will be made within sixty (60) calendar days from the receipt of proposals. CPA reserves the right to hold the contract award for ninety (90) calendar days from the date of receipt of proposals.

All responses to this RFP shall take into account any and all taxes that will be charged to the proposer awarded the contract for the project, including excise tax. Contractor must also take into consideration anticipated minimum wage increases. CPA will not consider unjustifiable cost escalations due to unforeseen circumstances once contract is executed.

Proposers shall also include performance and payment bonds premium (payment and performance issued by a U.S. treasury listed bonding company or CPA approved surety) which are required for this project. Performance bond shall be extended to cover the one-year warranty period upon project acceptance. Contractors must also adhere to the insurance requirements included in the proposal package.

Contractor will be responsible for acquiring all necessary permits and permitting documents for project.

Proposers shall also submit with proposal a statement of qualifications which should include résumés and experience of personnel that will be directly in charge of the project.

The contract period for the project will be based on the contractor's proposal. However, liquidated damages of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS ($1,000.00) shall be assessed the contractor for each calendar day the completion of the project is delayed beyond the contract completion date without excuse.

Inquiries regarding this Request for Proposals may be delivered to the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority at the Saipan International Airport, faxed to (670) 234-5962 or emailed to cpa.admin@pticom.com no later than March 12, 2010.

This procurement is made in accordance with the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations Section 3.6. CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

All proposals shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ EDWARD M. DELEON GUERRERO
Executive Director

Date: March 4, 2010

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XX, Issue No. 62

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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Obama is right on health care: If not now, when?

The Barack Obama who wowed America during his 2008 campaign re-emerged this week, making his most compelling case yet for health care reform legislation. If the president had only unleashed this approach a few months ago, the bill would probably already have his signature, and he could be spending his time figuring out how to create more jobs.

Obama literally rolled up his shirt sleeves at Arcadia University in Pennsylvania on Monday and demanded that members of Congress answer the question, "If not now, when? If not us, who?"

The president explained why doing nothing can't be an option. That's only a recipe for more of the same—higher insurance premiums, skyrocketing medical costs, a continual increase in the ranks of the uninsured and a steady decline in American businesses' ability to compete globally.

Obama hammered home the point that the current bill would insure 30 million Americans, end insurance companies' ability to deny coverage because of pre-existing conditions and offer a vehicle for reducing medical costs. Those would not only be dramatic steps toward ending the nation's health care crisis but would also provide the necessary platform for further improvements.

The president has it right when he accuses some members of Congress of worrying more about holding on to their jobs than helping the American people. Those lawmakers should take a hard look at the latest Associated Press poll showing "a widespread hunger for improvements to the health care system." More than half of those polled say health care should be changed a lot or "a great deal," and only 4 percent say it shouldn't be changed at all.

Winning final approval of health care legislation from Congress won't be easy. The only remaining political option—persuading House Democrats to pass the Senate version of the bill and then finding final agreement in a budget reconciliation bill—is littered with political minefields. That's the price Obama must pay for waiting this long to bring his considerable skills to the fight.

By standing on the sideline while Congress dithered, the president allowed the debate to focus only on the bill's weaknesses, which are well-documented. The public is less well-versed on what the bill could do for them.

One example is the potential to reduce medical costs through a new Medicare oversight board. The idea is to create a vehicle that could crack down on such things as unnecessary tests and encourage treatment based on medical outcomes. Critics will argue that the board could limit patients' access to tests they now receive routinely. No one likes having their medical options reduced. But superfluous medical tests are one of the many contributors to rising medical costs.

Americans clearly want changes to their health care system. The president must stay fully engaged in the effort to convince the American people that the current bill before Congress is in their best interests.

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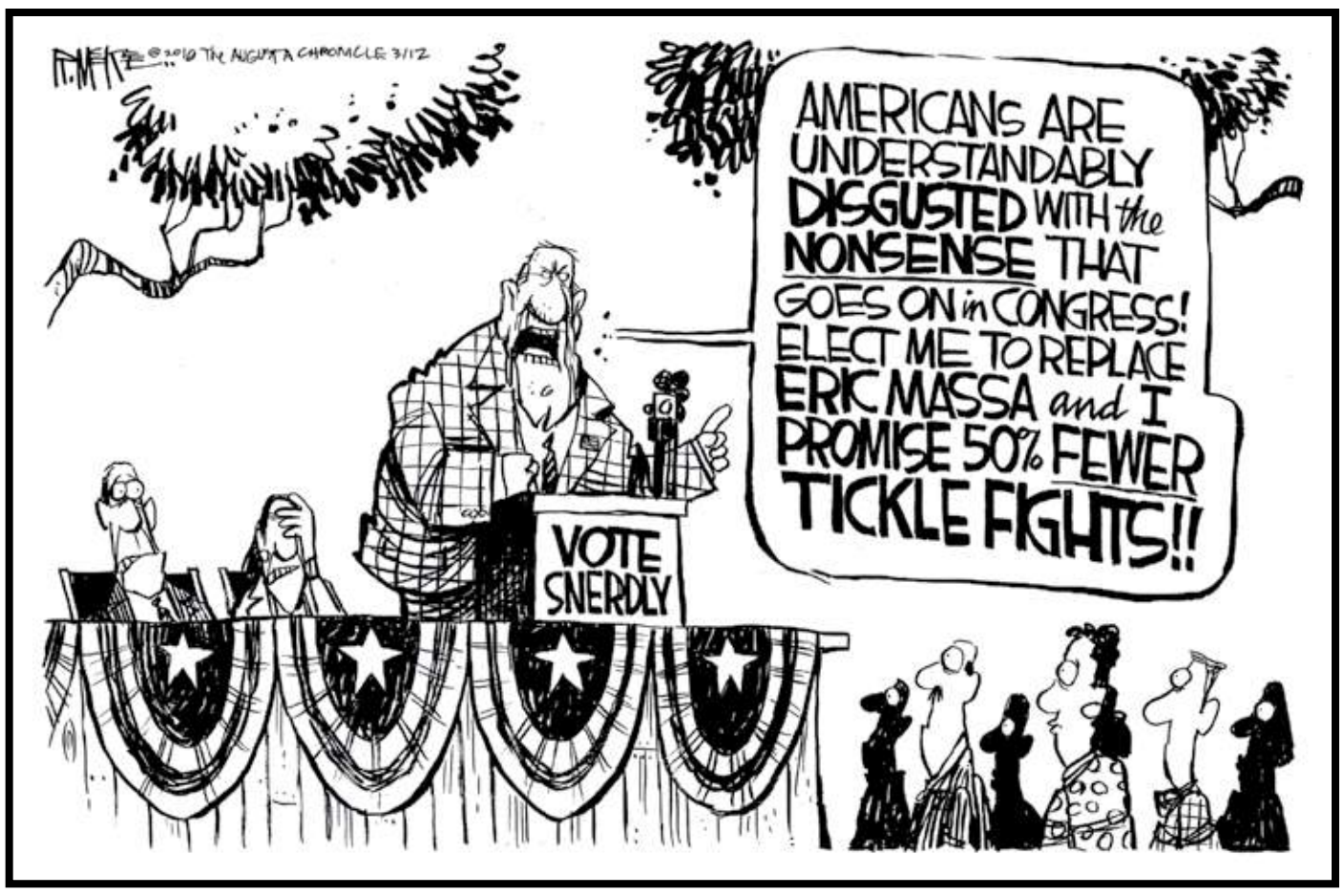

AMERICANS ARE UNDERSTANDABLY DISGUSTED WITH the NONSENSE THAT GOES ON in CONGRESS! ELECT ME TO REPLACE ERIC MASSA and I PROMISE 50% FEWER TICKLE FIGHTS!!
VOTE SNERDLY

The ultimate responsibility of parents

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

After you read this article I want each of us to close our eyes and recall when we were 16 or 17 years old. Recall when we were young, healthy, and cocky. Life was a bowl of cherries. We felt that we would live forever. We felt we could do anything we wanted.

Some of us dropped out of high school because we already knew everything. Why finish high school? The rest of us who stayed in high school were happy that it was about to end. Life was going to be a bowl of cherries. We'd get a high paying job or go to college. Yeah, we had it made.

We never heard the high school graduation speaker say that this is "not a graduation but a commencement." A few of us headed for college; many of us headed for government jobs, and the rest of us just decided to drift—no skills, no jobs. Our parents would feed and take care of us. No sweat! As the years passed we married and had children in wedlock and out of wedlock. But slowly the strain of the years began to wear on us. We became adults. We began to question whether we had made the right decision with our life.

Now let's open our eyes and look in the mirror. Are we happy and satisfied with what we have accomplished since those youthful days? For those of us who went to college and came back to get government jobs of one sort or another, are we happy? Are we doing well or are we disappointed with our decisions and the path we have traveled?

For the rest of us who drifted with no skills or ambition to get a job, are we living off our relatives or on food stamps? We know we messed up, but we feel it is too late to change. Besides we have survived so far. So why change?

What if someone who loved us—a parent, a relative, a teacher—someone—had sat down with us and had helped us chart a course from teenager to adulthood, would we have succeeded better? What if we had had a strong guiding hand that directed us to go to college or learn a skill, would we be happier? What if that person had also shown us what we can do if we educate ourselves? Think back. Did anyone motivate us? Or were we left alone to drift and find our own lonely way?

Where am I leading us to with this conversation? It is about our children who are 16 or 17. They are making the same decisions we had to at their ages. Should we step back and say nothing and let them follow the same path as we did without guidance? Or do we assume our responsibility to them and motivate them properly?

As we continue to recall our youth once filled with exuberance and promises, is our path the same path we want our children to follow? Do we tell them that the life we have lived and are living is the best there is? Are our dreams fulfilled?

If we are truthful will we tell them that we wish we had had someone who could have guided us? If only our parents, a teacher or someone who was interested in us would have sat down with us and said: "Look, you need to get an education or you need to learn a trade."

In a few months, many seniors will be graduating from high schools. As in the past years only a few students go on to college; a few will join the military. Over 50 percent, however, will drift along without a plan or goal. What will be their future and the future of our country since they will be replacing us?

What responsibility are we assuming for our sons and daughters? Are we going to let them make major decisions without any guidance at such a young age that will affect their entire life? Would we travel over the same path if we had a second chance?

I recall my personal life when I graduated from high school. At 18 I wanted to go into the entertainment industry in New York City. I was pretty cocky. I was definitely not going to go to college.

After pleading with my father, he agreed to let me go. However he made a deal with me. If I would attend a barber school in New York City and learn barbering while trying to break into show business, he would help me. The reason for barber school was that my uncle was a barber and my father insisted I learn that trade. He said that should I fail in my first love, I could still get a good paying job if I had a skill.

After two long years of trying to become an entertainer, I realized that I didn't have the necessary talent. However I did earn a barber license from the school. Upon returning home defeated, I decided to go to college. I finally realized I wasn't so smart after all. My dad said I could live at home but I would have to pay all my own expenses.

As a result I became a barber and attended college at the same time. From my earnings I was able to pay my tuition and books and also have spending money left over. How I bless my father for pushing me to learn a trade that carried me over hard times when I was young. I was fortunate to have wonderfully devoted parents to their children.

He had worked hard all his life and had experienced what it meant to be person without a skill or trade. Coming from Sicily he was very poor in English and could barely read and write. But he insisted that I, my brother and sister must learn a profession to get a decent paying job.

Just to feed and clothe them is not enough. We must feed their minds and souls just as we feed their stomachs. We parents must insist that our children better themselves. We must instill a sense of drive and ambition to better themselves. It is my and your responsibility that we insist that they exceed us. Together with our children we must plan the major decisions that will lead them from youth to adulthood.

We must lead them down roads carefully chosen so that later in life they don't feel as so many of us feel today: "How I wish I had taken a different path through life." Remember every son will replace his father and every daughter will replace her mother. Do we want them to be on a higher level than us or not?

Read the following poem by Robert Frost, *The Road Not Taken*. A young person comes to a fork in the road and must decide which way to go. Though both roads look at first sight equally good, he

See ULTIMATE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Be aware of the ides of March

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section*

A similar though not the same phrase like our title was popularized by Shakespeare's play on Julius Caesar; it's a soothsayer's foreboding message to the Roman Emperor. The term *ides* refers to the 15th day of March, May, July, and October; the 13th on the other months. The word itself originally meant the full moon and the ides of March was celebrated in honor Mars, the Roman god of war. Thornton Wilder's epistolary novel of the same title in '48 humanized Caesar and countered the fascist inclination to compare Mussolini to the Emperor. The reclusive Wilder's death last year has spawned new interest in his work, and a renaissance of his literary output is in the works.

None of the above has any bearing on the 15th of March in the Marianas. It will be just another ordinary Monday on Saipan. The full moon is not due until the 30th so no god of war debauchery is scheduled for the guardians of human mass destruction, although we do have the new moon in the ides of March, and an Obama stopover some 200 km south in between that and the full moon.

A new moon on Monday is the darkest phase of the lunar cycle. We have all been feted recently with the second installment of the movie version of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series, titled *New Moon,* a box office hit that has made our kids ardent devotees of cinema heartthrobs Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson and Taylor Lautner! Quite a distance from the Rock Hudson-Doris Day frolic of my youth! The new moon appeals to our hearts and dreams.

As total darkness precedes the new moon, we also know that the dark night of the soul is an ingredient in the journey to wholeness, whether observed in a religious practice like Christian retreats or in the disciplines of meditation, contemplation and prayer in other traditions of faith, or in the discovery of the secular sounds of silence. The "dark night of the soul" *(la noche oscura del alma)* metaphor comes from the Carmelite priest St. John of the Cross, the Spanish poet and Roman Catholic mystic. In the language of Christian piety, his poem narrates the journey of the soul from its bodily home to its union with spirit, that which posits its existence. The Carmelite tradition is not unfamiliar to the Marianas; a congregation thrives in Guam, and the retreat practices up Maturana House on Navy Hill are no stranger to the tradition.

The dark night of the soul points to the radical solitariness of human existence. While we live together, we die alone. Detachment from the illusions of meaning, on matters external to our human essence, is difficult and hard. We are born equipped with a survival ego through the genetic programming inherited from our lineage; we grow with the mask of personality, of bundled learned social skills from our cultures, to guide our social relations. We are self-obsessed. Those who journey in the dark night of the soul understand that ego and personality give way to a larger reality beyond itself for the real self to experience a significant and authentic existence. In an older metaphor, one practices penance for the wiles of the flesh to purify the errant will of the soul.

"Our hearts are restless until they rest in you," is the poetry of Augustine. He was pointing to the *summum bonum*, the sum of all goodness, in the *mysterium fidei,* the mystery of faith, to justify an otherwise reckless and restless existence. The Carmelites held St. John hostage for the implications of the soul-wrenching reforms he initiated within his Order. Mother Teresa's journals reveal the depth of her journey in the dark night of her soul, seldom experiencing a joyful union with the ground of her being even unto death.

Now, it is time to ask what has this got to do with the ides of March and Obama's flyover? Well, frankly, nothing. Not directly anyway. But were one to ask what is the paramount contradiction in our time that our lives need to address in this darkest phase of the lunar cycle—economic, political and cultural, and what freshness in our routine need to break into the vicious cycle of our despair to propel us into horizons we have never been before as the new moon emerges?

An obvious feature of our time is the preponderance of commercial value in social relations. We have taught the world by example to flirt with the temptation of the market economy to reduce every aspect of human life to its marketplace value. We have monetized virtue. Societal care such as education, health and welfare are remarkable in their paucity and high cost, but more stunning is our ability to make this scandalous situation invisible. Budgetary allocations to annihilate—in our criminal justice system and destructive extractive military-industrial complexes—get more attention and support than in preserving the life systems of the planet, and the life enhancing practices of humankind. As a wit mused, Americans are Democrats with Republican pocket books! We do not walk our talk!

The ides of March is about heeding the voice from the deep seats of our souls. The deepest level of communication is communion with that which is "not me, verily that which is not me," to quote a poet. A contemplative characterized that as being wordless. "It is beyond words, and beyond speech. Not that we have to discover a new unity. We have to discover an older unity. We are already one. But we imagine we are not. And what we have to recover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are." Who tells and lives that unity of life story in our time?

We are emerging with a Univearth story. We are children of the universe, and kinship applies to every living creature in our habitat. Yet, we live as if it is OK to have 15 percent of us have access to 85 percent of the Earth's resources, while the remaining 85 percent fight over the 15 percent leftover of the minority's leavings! And it is OK to exhaust our natural capital at the expense of the future generation. That will not do!

Today shall be the darkest phase of our moon, but the new moon it brings carries the newness of our dreams. May it be for the sake of the other, and definitely, in the preservation of our common home Earth where we are to survive and thrive. As I have been communing each afternoon with lagoon marine life, I wonder if the President has any desire to commune with us, or just out of curiosity look down literally and metaphorically at us from Air Force One?

Tonight, the moon will peek in profound yet wonder-filled silence, and I shall stare back in kind. That, I will do.

Palaoan Ma-apunta Chief

Si Señora Lynn Malerba, para uma-apunta kabesanten Mohegan na grupon Indian giya Amerika. Guiya finenina na palaoan ma-ayeg para este na puestu gi tautau niha. I grupuña famasu kumu i mas riku na grupon Indian gi industrian casino ni gaige gi Estadun Connecticut.

Este na grupo sumen felis industriaña gi bandan casino ya tumatachu kumu modelu ni matatitiye nu i pumalu grupon Indian siha ni mumalague bisnis casino.

Matuñgu` si Chief Malerba kumu kalaktus yan menhalum na palaoan. Ha tuñgu hafa masusesede gi katkuet eskaleran gobietnamentu. Lau gi mismu tiempu ti maliñgu attensioña gi nesessidat tautauña siha.

■ ■ ■

I kompanian Toyota unu gi mas famosu na fakterian kareta giya Japon. Guaha `nos kuantos fakteria lokue ha baba giya Amerika `nai ha emplelea 200,000 tantus na Amerikanu. Masita i presidenten este na kompania para u fannae` testimoñiu gi menan un` komiten Congresson Estados Unidos de America.

`Nai hu rikonose difektun kareta siha, guaha 32 pot sientu gi karetan Amerikanu man-mahala tatte pot difektu, 18 pot sientu i otru siha mudelu, 11 pot sientu ginen kompanian Toyota. Mientras tantus, mas talu megai karetan Amerikanu man-mahala halom pot seriosu na difektu. Buente pot para umana` mamahlau i kompanian Toyota sa` ha lachai muna` fan salakumba enteru industrian karetan Amerikanu.

Ke lau haye gai isau i losus i Amerikanu kada taloane dispues de amotsan kaddun tolañg, pechu yan un` kalahen batatas?

■ ■ ■

Guaha un` tiuhu mipasensia gi bandan tupag. Dispues de ha sotta haguetña, ha soñge chipaña ya kada madeñkut, ilegña, "I adai, puede midianu ya para hafa ta fafaisen hau nu i mañainamu." Adumididi estake bula i midianu na kahun ais. Ha aregla trastesña ya ha birague tatte gi tanu.

Mesñgun mamogsai boti ya libianu ha tulaika lugatña yangin ti katna. Bastara ke hagas pipeska, ha dimimoria sagan mafuti beni`, hiting, gadau yan otru siha guihan halom rubentasion.

Guaha `nai hana` fañageyu tinala' mafuti yan satmuneten achu. Ai de dios na pairen sentada piot ya un` lechen niyog yan un`naye doni` golai. Esta papagpag sikoshu `an hu sufa este na sentada.

■ ■ ■

Sessu hu faisenyu maisayu` hafa na sumen mañge ninalagun nana? Kau pot ti guahu mumaipe gi menan i fegun pat mañge i ninalagun otru? 'Sino, hafa na mañge kaddun guihan yangin tautau sankatan na islas muna' lagu? Ti hu tuñgu hafa ineppen miyu lau mañge ninalagun nana yan mañainata ginen sankatan siha na islas.

■ ■ ■

Duru i dibaten priniponen lai pot hinemlu giya Washington. Kada mona, tatte. Pagu gaige giya tatatte i asuntu. Megai kumuestiotiona hafa na i ekonomia i primera asuntu ya sige ha` i presidente ha suun` asuntun hinemlu?

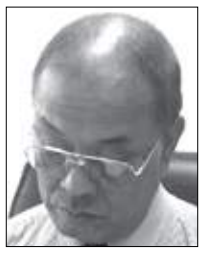
Guaha 15 miyon pagu na tautau gi enteru Amerika man-tai chechu`. Sige ha` este na numeru ma-umenta mit pot mit kada mes. Ha birague i Congresson Estados Unidos para u ekstende mas ayudun pagamientu para ayu i esta pagu ti manma-implelea.

Bulachu mampos i asuntu. Tat ti kumuentos pot hafa mapropopone, kontra `sino fabot. Esta mana malañgu i asuntu tantu de mapañot sin mañgañgas.

■ ■ ■

Layu i amiguhu ginen Guahan hafa na ti hu rikonosegue `nai mattuyu pot otru nessesidat. Hu atan un`ratu pues hu sañgane: "Ginen Guahan hau, naan ni misustansia sa` man-guaha hamyu. Ginen tanu ha`ilasyu sa` hagas taya guinahaña i tanu mame deste antes".

Matman ya sige chumaleg tuyan pues ilegña: "Hafa un` kekesañgan?" Hu chage talu: "Ginen tanu abundasia hau. Guahu ginen islan ha`ilas". Esta pagu ti uma`akomprende ham sa` sige fuminu` Iñglish, guahu gi finu Chamorro. Kulan dos bachet ni sige ma-espiha un` hagua gi halom sakaten netti.



By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John S. DelRosario is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section*

Letter to the Editor

Insanity

I read the Saturday paper and was bewildered and shocked. Our esteemed Judge Govendo had released an alleged kidnapper and potential child molester. Why? I know there are always two sides to every story and there may have been mitigating circumstances but I can think of no credible reason to release Steven Hocog from jail. His release potentially puts other children at risk from another kidnapping and/or molestation and puts Mr. Hocogs well-being into question as well.

I have talked with many a father (and a few mothers) that have said they would bury any man who endangered their children. If we were back in the Old West, this type of criminal would be found swinging from a tree. I certainly do not advocate this type of justice and have a somewhat reduced faith in the judicial system but worse things have happened.

With all due respect to Judge Govendo, I pray that this lapse in judgment does not lead to another kidnapping or worse. That would be a tragedy indeed.

Alan Elder
Kagman III, Saipan

ULTIMATE

From Page 10

decides to take a lesser traveled road which later in his life makes all the difference:

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth. ….

I shall be telling this with a sigh,
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference."

What will our children be saying about the road they took years later? Will we have guided them or will they stumble along and wish that a parent, a teacher, a friend, a relative—someone—had guided them? When they leave our nest will they be able to soar high like eagles enjoying the panoramic view? Helping them to make the major decision is our ultimate responsibility as a parent**.** Let's get off our "buts" (no excuses) and do it!

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼75°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

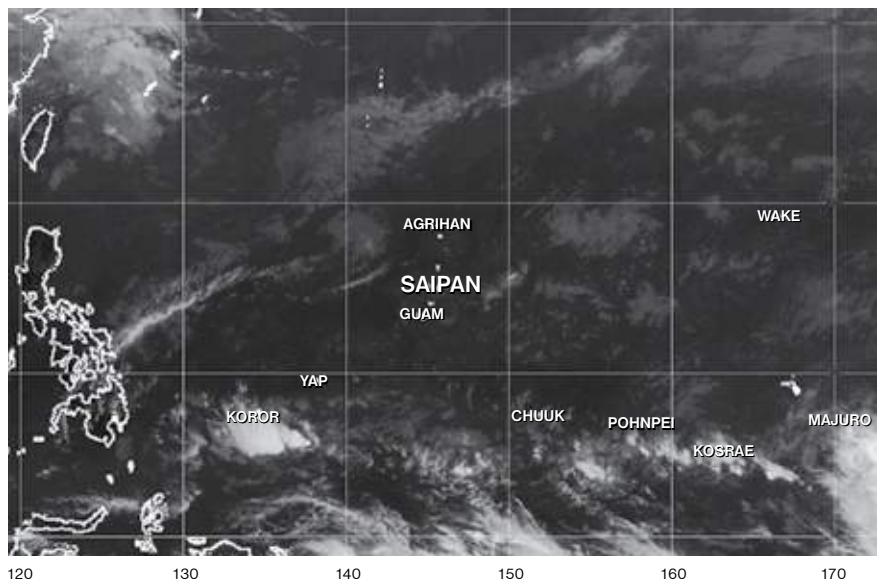
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼75
Palau	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲87	▼76
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲84	▼78
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼75
Majuro	Rain	▲84	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲71	▼62
Beijing	Sunny	▲40	▼25
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲83	▼69
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲75	▼67
London	Cloudy	▲48	▼42
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲83	▼54
Manila	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼75
Melbourne	Sunny	▲83	▼57
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲77	▼61
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲51	▼39
Osaka	Rain	▲66	▼46
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲47	▼40
Pusan	Rain	▲51	▼30
Rome	Sunny	▲54	▼34
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲61	▼43
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲64	▼48
Seoul	Showers	▲44	▼18
Tokyo	Showers	▲65	▼53
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲57	▼42

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An old shear line enters the discussion area at 25N147E and extends southwestward to 16N132E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are seen along and up to 275 miles northwest of this boundary. A near-equatorial trough extends northeastward from 2N130E to a weak circulation centered southeast of Koror at 5N138E then east-southeastward to end south of Majuro at EQ170E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms associated with the circulation are occurring over Koror and southwest of Yap between 5N and 7N from 132E to 138E. Trade winds converging north of the trough are generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Pohnpei within 80 miles of a line from 4N154E to 5N160E to 4N167E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers north of Kwajalein and Majuro within 100 miles of a line from 13N168E to 14N174E to 13N180. A surface trough reaches southeastward from 8N170E to EQ175E. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring just southeast of Majuro and over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls within 100 miles of a line from 6N172E to 1N175E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:35 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
7:45 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
1:57 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
7:35 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:25 AM	6:27 PM
Tuesday	6:24 AM	6:27 PM
Wednesday	6:24 AM	6:27 PM
Thursday	6:23 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:22 AM	6:28 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:40 AM	5:56 PM
Tuesday	6:15 AM	6:43 PM
Wednesday	6:51 AM	7:31 PM
Thursday	7:29 AM	8:22 PM
Friday	8:09 AM	9:15 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 6, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

DL638	8:00am	10:55am	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	5:50am	8:40am	Daily
DL638/288	8:00am	1:40pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL297	4:35pm	7:30pm	Daily
DL289	4:50pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
OZ606/703	3:20pm	10:55pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

DL641	9:05pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL290	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
DL298	10:15am	2:45pm	Daily
DL287/641	5:50pm	1:35am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via NGO
DL288	9:00pm	1:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

A measure of clarity

Editor's Note: The following statement was issued by Interior Assistant Secretary Tony Babauta on the Federal Labor Ombudsman's public comments regarding alien employment.

By TONY BABAUTA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Tony Babauta is the Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs in the Department of the Interior.

During this past week, the Northern Marianas Labor Department has taken great liberty in its public criticism of Federal Labor Ombudsman, Pam Brown, for guidance she provided at an open forum to educate the public on the impact of P.L. 110-229 on employing aliens in the Northern Marianas.

In preparation of this forum, Ms. Brown and I discussed the issues in great detail with the Department of Homeland Security to ensure there was a consensus between our respective Departments on the implementation of Federal law and local law. I am confident that the guidance provided by the Department of Homeland Security, has been properly expressed by Ms. Brown during her forum.

I am further encouraged that in the very near future, the Department of Homeland Security will issue its guidance on employing aliens in the Northern Marianas.

I expect that the information which Ms. Brown has thus far conveyed, along with the guidance, will provide a greater measure of clarity to the Northern Marianas government, local employers, and aliens.

A 24-hour nightmare with DPS

My name is Li Gui Xiang. I was born on March 15, 10982. I am from Jilin Province in China. I came to Saipan in November 2006 for work.

On Feb. 5, 2010, at 10:30am, I drove a car on my way to Garapan with my friends, Hong Mie, Xiao Zen, Dajie, Tian Ye. When we drove by Sunny Restaurant, I heard the police siren behind me. Immediately I pulled over the roadside. A policewoman walked to me; she seemed upset and said something very quickly. Although I did not understand what she said, I handed her my driver's license and car registration documents. She took the papers and walked back to her car. I saw her leaning on her car and write something, so I stepped out of my car to find out what was happening. She gestured that I stay in the car. So I did. After a few minutes of waiting, Dajie said she was in a hurry. I then walked out of the car again and tried to explain to the policewoman. She looked angry when she saw me walk to her. I realized I should back off but it was too late. She grabbed my left arm against her car and handcuffed me. I was scared so I started to yell why she handcuffed me. But the shouting made her angrier. She then put me on the ground with her knee against my back, she sprayed pepper spray at my eyes. I was terrified. I couldn't open my eyes and I was lying on the ground and crying. Then the policewoman dragged me into her car. I heard the policewoman close the car door and turn the siren on and drove me to the jail.

The police car drove through an iron door. I squat at the corner and cried for my boss. I saw that policewoman was there with other policewomen. Then I was given a piece of paper to sign. I did not understand what it wrote and asked for my boss or at least a translator. I also asked them to allow me to wash my eye since they are so painful. A policeman took me to the restroom and took the handcuffs off. But he also locked me inside the toilet. I banged on the door and shout for help. No one came. I stayed inside the toilet for about half and hour.

Then two policewomen came and gave me the inmate shirt. I stayed at the corner and refused to put it on. I cried, "I don't put that on. I did not make mistake, why you keep me here?" One policewoman said to me, "Don't waste our time." Then both of them grabbed my arms and took off my shirt. I screamed and shouted, they did not care and took off my shoes and socks then my pants. Then they stared at my bra and asked me if I hide anything inside my bra. I cried and told them there was nothing inside. After I flashed to prove there was really nothing, they were finally satisfied. One of the policewoman said I was like a baby. She put the inmate shirt on me and brought me to the cell (holding). I realized there were no help. I lay on the concrete bed and cried and cried till the second meal came. I was not hungry but only shivering and cold. I felt totally humiliated. Later it was about end of the day, the only policewoman left there asked me was I ready to sign the paper. So I signed the paper but I have no idea what it says on it. I was so shaky that she had to hold my hands for fingerprints. Finally she transferred me to the normal cell, away from that chilly room. By that time I have no idea what time that was. The next morning, on Feb. 6, around 9am, a policewoman released me after few procedures. It was my nightmare 24 hours.

Li Gui Xiang
San Jose, Saipan

The farmer vs the bulldozer

Some friends have asked why I have been so "quiet" lately. Where are my letters to the editor? Where is my daily dose of rabble rousing?

We all know that change is an essential part of life. And when it comes to people, we know that we can change for the better, or we can change for the worse. Within the last few months, I have spent a great deal of time reflecting on my actions of the past. In my self-reflection, I learned that if I wanted to change for the better, I had to stop talking and start listening.

In my quest to become a better person, I received some profound advice from an uncle who was making small talk with me at a family barbecue. He said, "You can act as a bulldozer and run over and destroy the land. Or you can act as a farmer and plant seeds for change. But you cannot be both." This advice has stuck with me since. My uncle does not have a doctorate or a law degree, nor does he have a million dollars. But he has wisdom, and more importantly, a good heart. He has always put his family first and he is loved by so many. This, to me, is worth more than all the money in the world.

If there is anything I have learned from my friends, it is that one of the best ways you can bring about positive change in any society is by being a good parent. I have several friends who are amazing parents, but one who I have a great deal of respect and admiration for is Wil Hunter. Wil is the kind of person who you rarely see out. No matter how many times we try to take him out for a night on the town, he will not join us. It's not because he is a prude. And it certainly isn't because he doesn't like to party, as Wil enjoys socializing and cold beer just as much as any of us local boys. You see, Wil's greatest joy is his family. He is happiest when he is with them. And he is an amazing father and husband. I have learned a lot from my friend, who I like to call the "Gentle Giant." He is a giant, not so much because of his 6'2" tank-like build, but because he has the biggest heart when it comes to his family and friends. "Family first" is not a slogan for Wil. It is a way of life. And I thank him for being a dear friend and role model and for inspiring me to be a better father and husband.

I will always be an advocate for change and will always wear my heart on my sleeve. But how I go about doing it will be different and on my own terms. In my self-reflection and quest to be a better person, I have learned that I cannot bring change by ridiculing people. I cannot bring change by talking without listening. And I certainly cannot bring change by criticizing without offering sound solutions. The truth is, change is all around us, but it is often inconspicuous. Real change occurs when and where we least expect it.

If we as a society learn from our mistakes, treat each other with respect, and strive to be better people, how can the CNMI not flourish and prosper? From this day forward, I wish to be a farmer, not a bulldozer.

Ed Propst
Dandan, Saipan

Overhaul personnel practices

I have noticed with some doubt the way our Legislature is approaching the solution to the budget crisis in the CNMI government. The two main items in the budget are Personnel and All Others (operation). Personnel is about 65-70 percent of the budget. If the policy target is to resolve the personnel cost, then it is critical that we focus on the specifics of personnel practices. The compensation plan setting the pay structure for graded positions is composed of 46 pay ranges and each pay range consists of 10 steps. If the government's policy is to match what it can afford in line with the budget shortfall, it should make the dollar amount or the percentage reduction in the pay ranges and steps of positions across the board. Since this is a linear condition, its calculation should be straightforward and absolute. On the other hand, it is a practical undertaking because all procurement, whether it is for personnel or operations, is subject to availability of funds. The other aspect about this is that we need not worry about closing government offices or shortening the workweek of employees. This would also resolve PSS' concerns that triggered their objection to the austerity bill that was recently entertained in the Legislature.

The problem of pay for positions utilized by the CNMI government is that the basis on which the pay is based has no justification. In other words, pay level or salary amount is arbitrarily set. If pay is determined on the basis of what the CNMI government can afford to pay or its ability to pay, then the current compensation plans of the OPM, including those of the autonomous agencies and other jurisdictional branches of the CNMI government, are not justified by sound job evaluations. How the compensation plan came about that resulted in 46 pay ranges and 10 steps is anyone's guess. Hence, the pay schemes have no nexus or connection to the value of the position by which the CNMI government is paying for. This situation, as you can see, has a dismal impact on the budget. The problem is that we continue to force the pay issue on the government as if these pay practices are set in stone that cannot be corrected.

It is not the governor's headache to figure this matter out. Instead, the lawmakers and the governor should defer this matter to the professionals that are responsible for this matter. We seem to be working this backward in that we continue to perpetuate the implementation of a poorly devised compensation strategy. To resolve this matter, the governor must dictate that the government can only afford to pay a certain dollar amount for "Personnel." He should instruct all human resource experts of agencies to produce the compensation plan that would meet the availability of funds. There is no reason that this directive should be delayed after a deadline date or target time frame.

The future calls for the compression of the present pay ranges and steps being practiced by OPM. There is no good reason to continue implementing this antiquated pay practice. The bottom line is for OPM to overhaul its entire personnel administration practices, policies, procedures and regulations. We need to meet our present needs and administer a most feasible and practical personnel administration that would stabilize the CNMI government's budget resources.

Francisco R. Agulto
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

Kill bill

In reference to the story "House kills austerity bill," thank you members of the House of Representatives. I think this is the only kill everyone supports. Thanks to those legislators that supported the elimination of austerity from our fears. Thanks for considering the educational future of our children and the potential harm to everything else this bill would entail. Now the public knows that you are a true representation of the people who voted for you and that members of the legislature do consider all of us, not just some, in this economic hardship.

Secondly, if only there was a real economist as one of the highly paid advisers then maybe Obama's theory of pouring money in the form of stimulus would be understood and the idea of initiating an austerity watch in the CNMI would be recognized as actually very harmful and totally against growing the economy. No wonder we are shrinking.

Most importantly, I cannot thank enough those lawmakers that succumbed to the complaints and the people's outcry. I, for one, am so satisfied to hear your decision. If only we can blame someone for offering false and empty promises, factories and more businesses, or better times for that matter, but... So, thank you once more, even if it is on a limited time basis only or until you are scheduled for a meeting. Let's just hope this bill stays dead.

Karla Cabrera
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

Abuse at Guam airport

I am a 67-year-old American citizen and would like to let you know that I too have been subjected to abject abuse by the airport authorities -n Guam. I first traveled here in November 2005 and have returned several times but not through Guam. It is very unfortunate that the Department of Homeland Security (or the Guam Airport Authority) has done nothing to remedy this despicable behavior by a few. Those employees should be investigated *and if found guilty of such allegations should then be summarily dismissed.* I am currently living on Saipan and will not travel through Guam unless it is unavoidable. Those few responsible are giving the island a bad reputation, one that Saipan can not ill afford.

Richard Helmly
via e-mail

Q&A Employment authorization and verification in the CNMI

On Nov. 28, 2009, the Immigration and Nationality Act and other federal immigration laws took effect in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, as provided by the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008. This document answers common questions employers and workers have about employment authorization and verification under federal immigration law, particularly with respect to so-called "umbrella permits." During the last weeks of immigration control by the CNMI government, the CNMI government issued two-year transition conditional permits, commonly referred to as "umbrella permits," to many people holding CNMI alien permits.

Q. Is the employment authorization of aliens present in the CNMI a matter of federal law or of CNMI territorial law?

A. The employment authorization of aliens in the CNMI is now a matter of federal law. However, for a two-year period following the Nov. 28, 2009, transition to federal immigration law, federal law authorizes aliens to work based on the employment authorization they had received under CNMI law as of the transition date. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which is charged with administering and enforcing the immigration laws, fully recognizes employment authorization based on that provision, as further discussed in this guidance.

Q. What is an "umbrella permit"?

A. An umbrella permit is the common name for several types of Transition Conditional permits issued by the CNMI Department of Labor or the CNMI Department of Commerce in the fall of 2009 shortly before the Nov. 28, 2009, transition to federal immigration law. DHS is currently aware of the following types of umbrella permits:

- Category 240K Foreign National Worker Permit
- Category 240D Immediate Relative Permit (immediate relative of U.S. citizen)
- Category 240E Immediate Relative Permit (immediate relative of sponsoring alien)
- Category 240G, 240N, 240O Investment and Business Permit
- Category 240H Foreign Student Permit and
- Category 240B CNMI Government Permit

Umbrella permits have the seal of the CNMI DOL at the upper right. The letterhead varies: CNMI DOL (Category 240K); CNMI Department of Commerce (Category 240G, 240N, 240O, or Category 240H); or CNMI Division of Immigration (Category 240D, Category 240E).

Q. As the holder of an umbrella permit, may I work in the CNMI under federal law?

A. In the case of the Category 240K Foreign National Worker Permit, you are authorized to work for any private sector employer in the CNMI until Nov. 27, 2011. In the case of the Category 240D Immediate Relative Permit, the Category 240H Foreign Student Permit, and the Category 240G, 240N, 240O Investment and Business Permit, you are authorized to work for any private or public sector employer in the CNMI until Nov. 27, 2011. In the case of the Category 240B CNMI government Permit, you are authorized to work only for the CNMI government until Nov. 27, 2011.

The Category 240E Immediate Relative permit does NOT provide for work authorization. Holders of this permit are not authorized to work in the CNMI, unless they have another basis for work authorization. All references to employment authorization under an umbrella permit in this guidance apply only to authorization under a permit other than a Category 240E. To constitute evidence of work authorization, an umbrella permit must state on its face that it authorizes employment.

Note that if you are authorized to work in the CNMI on a basis other than an umbrella permit, your work authorization may expire on a date other than Nov. 27, 2011.

Q. My umbrella permit has two dates. Which one controls the length of my authorized employment?

A. Holders of umbrella permits authorizing employment may work until Nov. 27, 2011, even if the permit contains two dates. Umbrella permits contain a date with the legend "Next filing date to avoid revocation." They also state that the permit is without effect after Nov. 27, 2011. If these two dates are different, the holder of an umbrella permit is authorized to work in the CNMI until Nov. 27, 2011. When completing Form I-9 CNMI, if an employee changes employers, the date Nov. 27, 2011 should be used as the expiration date for work authorization in Section 1 of the form and as the document expiration date in Section 2 of the form.

Q. As an employer in the CNMI, do I need the approval of the CNMI DOL to hire the holder of an umbrella permit for new employment?

A. No. federal law does not require that you seek CNMI DOL approval to hire an alien with an umbrella permit for new employment in the CNMI. Your new employee must fully complete Section 1 of the Form I-9 CNMI no later than the date that he or she begins work, and you (the employer) must examine the employee's documentation and complete Section 2 of the Form I-9 within three business days after the date the employee begins work.

Q. Can an umbrella permit be extended or revoked?

A. Umbrella permits are valid through Nov. 27, 2011; the maximum period of time permitted by federal law, and cannot be extended. An employee will need another work authorization under federal law to continue to work after that date. Even if CNMI authorities revoke a holder's umbrella permit, the holder remains authorized to work under federal law until Nov. 27, 2011.

Q. As an umbrella permit holder, how can I obtain an immigration status that will allow me to remain in the CNMI after Nov. 27, 2011?

A. You will need to obtain an immigration status under federal law to remain lawfully in the CNMI after your umbrella permit expires on Nov. 27, 2011. USCIS will provide further guidance on U.S. immigration statuses and the CNMI later in the transition period. There are many statuses under U.S. law, and which one may be available to you is something only you (or your employer in the case of employment-based statuses) can determine. Most federal immigration statuses are currently available to eligible applicants, but the CNMI transitional worker and transitional investor statuses are not yet available. For more information about federal immigration benefits, visit the USCIS Web site at www.uscis.gov.

Q. Can holders of umbrella permits change employment without regard to existing employment contracts or to professional licensing requirements?

A. Under federal immigration law, employment authorization of an umbrella permit holder or other alien authorized to work affects only the basic privilege to work in the CNMI. Contractual arrangements between an employer and an alien employee do not affect an employee's employment authorization under federal immigration law, and DHS will not enforce such arrangements. However, contractual obligations may affect an employee's ability to obtain new employment and/or an employer's obligations toward that employee as a matter of contract law. Employers and employees remain fully responsible for complying with all other occupational and licensing requirements under CNMI law. For example, an umbrella permit authorizes its holder generally to work in the CNMI, but it does not authorize the holder to work as a physician unless the holder is qualified and licensed to practice medicine in the CNMI. Similarly, CNMI employers are responsible for complying with other applicable requirements of law, such as wage and hour and occupational safety requirements.

Q. Does this mean that if I hold an umbrella permit I cannot be removed from the CNMI until after Nov. 27, 2011?

A. No. The holder of an umbrella permit is authorized to work until Nov. 27, 2011. Under another provision of the CNRA, an alien who was lawfully present in the CNMI under CNMI law on Nov. 28, 2009 cannot be removed solely on the basis of being present in the United States without inspection until the expiration of the status formerly granted by the CNMI or Nov. 27, 2011, whichever is sooner. However, aliens who have work authorization can still be removed. All other grounds of removal from the United States apply, including inadmissibility due to committing certain crimes. If you violate federal immigration law, DHS may seek your removal from the United States. If you are placed in a removal proceeding, you have procedural rights including the ability to request protection from being returned to a country where you would suffer persecution or torture.

Q. On the transition date, I was an investor (or visitor, temporary worker, student, permanent resident, etc.) under CNMI law. What is my status under federal immigration law?

A. On Nov. 28, 2009, immigration statuses granted under CNMI law ceased to exist as a matter of law. Aliens in the CNMI (other than those holding U.S. lawful permanent resident ("green card") status) who have not been inspected and admitted or paroled by a federal immigration officer on or after that date are aliens present in the United States without inspection, regardless of their former status under CNMI law. Former CNMI immigration statuses did not convert to equivalent statuses under federal law. However, the CNRA provided transition provisions under which aliens may complete the period of stay that they were authorized as of the transition date, or lawfully remain for two years after that date, whichever is sooner. Aliens in the CNMI who are within this period of authorized stay will be considered lawfully present under federal immigration law, and will not be removed from the CNMI unless they commit some other violation of law (such as committing a crime) that makes them removable, and as long as their activities in the CNMI are consistent with those authorized by their previous CNMI status (for example, students should attend school, and tourists may not work). Although employment authorization and immigration status are not necessarily the same thing, DHS will consider an alien who has been granted an umbrella permit to be authorized to lawfully remain in and to be employed in the CNMI until Nov. 27, 2011, as long as the alien is engaged in the activity that is the alien's reason for lawful presence.

Q. I have a student umbrella permit or an investment and business umbrella permit. Can I work fulltime for any employer?

A. Yes, but only as long as you are maintaining the activities that are the basis of your authority to lawfully remain in the CNMI until Nov. 27, 2011. For example, if you are a student you may be employed, but you must remain in school. If you have an investment or business permit, you must continue the investment or business activity that was the basis for the permit. In short, you may be employed only to the extent that your employment does not prevent you from fully carrying out the activity that was the basis for your permit.

Q. I am on the CNMI's "barred employer list." Does federal immigration law prohibit me from employing aliens who are authorized to be employed in the CNMI?

A. No. DHS neither maintains nor enforces a CNMI "barred employer list". You may hire workers as a matter of federal immigration law as long as you comply with Form I-9 requirements and other applicable federal requirements. However, employers on the CNMI's "barred employer" list may be subject to enhanced monitoring by federal agencies to ensure full compliance with all applicable federal laws, including but not limited to, those governing wages, work hours, employment eligibility verification, work conditions and treatment, and worksite safety.

Q. Does my umbrella permit authorize me to travel outside the CNMI and return?

A. No. The umbrella permit is not a document authorizing travel to Guam or to any other part of the United States, including return to the CNMI from a foreign destination. You may depart the CNMI for a foreign destination at any time, but if you intend to return to the CNMI, you MUST obtain a visa from a U.S. consulate abroad or a grant of advance parole from USCIS. ALL travel to any U.S. destination, including travel from the CNMI to Guam and travel from any foreign place to the CNMI, requires acceptable travel documents under federal immigration law.

Q. If I quit my job or I am terminated from employment, does my umbrella permit authorize me to remain in the CNMI until Nov. 27, 2011 without working?

A. That depends. The purpose of the continuing work authorization provision of the CNRA is to encourage gainful employment in the CNMI by holders of the umbrella permit or others authorized to work there. If the holder of an umbrella permit is not employed and lacks some other lawful basis under federal immigration law to remain, he or she may be subject to removal from the CNMI by DHS. DHS will consider situations involving possible removal on a case-by-case basis. Note, however, that if you have an umbrella permit that includes work authorization but whose primary purpose is not employment, you may remain lawfully in the CNMI without working, as long as you maintain the activity that is the basis of the permit. In particular, holders of student permits, or investor and business permits, are not required to be otherwise employed as long as they continue to be students, or maintain their investment or business activity, as appropriate under their permit.

Q. Can the CNMI government or my employer remove me from the CNMI?

A. No. Only DHS may lawfully remove an alien from the United States, including the CNMI. Within DHS, this authority is limited to immigration officers who are authorized and trained to enforce federal immigration law, and who are acting in compliance with federal immigration laws and regulations including (when applicable) executing a final order of removal issued by the U.S. Department of Justice. If you are

Continued on Next Page

not in DHS custody, you may voluntarily choose to leave the CNMI, and your employer may be contractually obligated to pay the cost of your repatriation.

Q. What is the Form I-9 CNMI?

A. Federal immigration law requires all U.S. employers to verify the identity and employment authorization of each newly hired employee. The Form I-9 is a USCIS form established for this purpose. As CNMI employers are U.S. employers for Section 274A purposes as of Nov. 28, 2009, Form I-9 requirements apply to their new hires on or after that date. The Form I-9 CNMI is a version of the Form I-9 designated for use only in the CNMI that allows for the use of several types of employment authorization documents that are unique to the CNMI, in addition to those acceptable in other parts of the United States. When completing the Form I-9 CNMI, the employee attests to his or her employment authorization status in Section 1 of the form and presents his or her employer with acceptable documents that demonstrate his or her identity and employment authorization. The employer inspects the documents and records them in Section 2 of the form. Form I-9 CNMI requirements apply to ALL new hires, regardless of citizenship.

Q. How Do I Complete the Form I-9 CNMI?

A. The Form I-9 CNMI has three sections. A new employee must complete, date and sign Section 1 of the form, including the attestation of his or her citizenship or immigration status no later than the first date of employment. The new employee should then select and show the employer one or more documents from the list of acceptable documents on the back of the Form I-9 CNMI establishing identity and work authorization. The employer must complete, date and sign Section 2 of the Form I-9 CNMI no later than three days after the new employee begins his or her employment. To complete Section 2, the employer must identify the document or documents the new employee presented, insert the date of hire, and certify that the employer inspected the original document(s) establishing identity and work authorization and determined that the documents reasonably appeared on their face to be genuine and to relate to the new employee. Section 3 of the Form I-9 CNMI is not completed when initially hiring a new employee. Section 3 should be used only when the work authorization of certain foreign workers expires after their initial hire. For more information on how to complete the Form I-9 CNMI, employers should consult the USCIS Handbook for Employers (M-274).

Q. The Form I-9 CNMI is in English. What if my new employee does not understand English?

A. Section 1 of the Form I-9 CNMI must still be completed no later than the first day of employment. If the employee needs assistance in completing Section 1 in English because he or she does not understand English or for some other reasons, the individual (including a representative of the employer) must also separately complete, date and sign the "translation/assistance" portion of Section 1.

Q. Do I need to complete the Form I-9 CNMI for my current employees?

A. You only need to complete the Form I-9 CNMI for employees hired on or after Nov. 28, 2009. You should not complete the Form I-9 CNMI for any employees already working for you on Nov. 28, 2009 who are continuing in their employment, even if you assign them new job responsibilities after that date.

Q. Is an umbrella permit acceptable documentation of employment authorization for the Form I-9 CNMI?

A. DHS considers a valid umbrella permit stating that the permit holder is work authorized to be a temporary work authorization letter issued by the CNMI DOL, which may be used to complete Section 2 of the Form I-9 CNMI. The umbrella permit must contain the name and photograph of the person. If the umbrella permit indicates issuance by a CNMI government agency other than the CNMI DOL, it must at least bear the seal of the CNMI DOL at the top right of the document. In addition to the umbrella permit, the employee must also present an unexpired foreign passport. These two documents are considered "List A" documentation of identity and employment authorization for Form I-9 CNMI purposes. The documents must reasonably appear to be genuine and to relate to the person presenting them. The Category 240E Immediate Relative Permit does not state that the permit holder is work authorized, and therefore this type of permit is not acceptable documentation of identity and employment authorization.

Q. May an employer accept an umbrella permit issued after Nov. 27, 2009?

A. The authority of the CNMI government to grant immigration statuses and work authorization ended on Nov. 27, 2009. Umbrella permits or other alien work authorization documentation issued by the CNMI government after that date are generally not acceptable evidence of work authorization for Form I-9 purposes. However, DHS recognizes that there may be situations where CNMI documentation issued before that date is lost, stolen or damaged, and in the situation where the CNMI government simply replaces a previously issued umbrella permit that was lost, stolen or damaged (as opposed to issuing any documentation reflecting any different immigration status or work authorization than that applicable on Nov. 27, 2009), that document may be used for Form I-9 purposes. Similarly, umbrella permits that are revised or reissued purely to correct clerical error, in particular to include a photograph, may be used for Form I-9 purposes to the same extent as umbrella permits issued before Nov. 27, 2009.

Please note that acceptable valid, unexpired "List B" documentation used in the Form I-9 process as evidence of identity only, such as a CNMI driver's license, may be used whether its date of issuance is before or after Nov. 28, 2009.

Q. My umbrella permit does not have a photograph. What should I do?

A. You do not need to present your umbrella permit with photograph to continue working for your current employer if you began your employment before Nov. 28, 2009. However, if you change employers, your umbrella permit must contain a photograph if you use that document for Form I-9 CNMI purposes. DHS cannot issue or amend umbrella permits. Please contact the CNMI DOL for information about affixing photographs to umbrella permits issued without them.

Q. I do not have an unexpired foreign passport. Can I work with my umbrella permit?

A. You do not need to present your passport and umbrella permit to continue working for your current employer. However, if you change employers, you will need to present an unexpired foreign passport along with your umbrella permit if you use that document for Form I-9 CNMI purposes. If you do not have a foreign passport, you will need to obtain one. If your country of nationality will not issue you a passport (for example, if CNMI or federal authorities have granted you protection from removal because you would be persecuted in your country of nationality), please make an appointment online to visit the USCIS Application Support Center, TSL Plaza Building, Beach Road South, Saipan, for more information on what options may be available to you.

Q. My umbrella permit has been lost, stolen, or damaged. What should I do?

A. DHS cannot replace an umbrella permit for you. You should contact the CNMI DOL regarding its procedures for replacement of umbrella permits that have been lost, stolen, or damaged. Under Form I-9 CNMI procedures, a receipt for an application for the replacement document is acceptable evidence of work authorization for a period of up to 90 days. The individual must present the replacement document within that time period.

Q. As an employer, may I demand that my new employee present his or her umbrella permit when completing Form I-9 CNMI?

A. No. The employee may present any acceptable document or document combination, as described in the instructions to the Form I-9 CNMI. The documents must reasonably appear to be genuine and to relate to the individual. Employers who require employees to present specific Form I-9 documents may be considered to have committed an unfair immigration-related employment practice under Section 274B of the INA, which may result in fines or penalties. Section 274B is enforced by the Office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC) in the U.S. Department of Justice. For more information about the anti-discrimination requirements of Section 274B, employers should contact OSC at 1-800-255-8155 or visit OSC's Web site at www.usdoj.gov/crt/osc.

Q. May I hire an employee who I know is not authorized to work in the CNMI?

A. No. An employer in the CNMI who hires, or knowingly continues to employ, an employee who the employer knows to be unauthorized to work in that employment is in violation of Section 274A of the INA, and may be subject to civil money penalties or (if a pattern or practice of such hiring is established) criminal prosecution. An employer with knowledge of an employee's unauthorized status may be penalized even if the employee is able to present Form I-9 CNMI documentation. However, an employer who complies in good faith with Form I-9 CNMI verification requirements has established a defense to a charge of knowingly hiring an unauthorized employee.

Q. Who is responsible for enforcing penalties against employers who knowingly employ unauthorized aliens, or who fail to comply with Form I-9 CNMI requirements?

A. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), a component of DHS, is responsible for enforcing Section 274A of the INA, in coordination with the U.S. Department of Justice as appropriate.

Q. What is the process for assessing penalties under Section 274A of the INA?

A: In general, if ICE believes that an employer has violated Section 274A based on its inspection of Forms I-9 CNMI or other information, ICE may serve a Notice of Intent to Fine upon the employer. The Notice of Intent to Fine will advise the employer of the civil money penalties ICE seeks to assess. If the employer contests the charge, the employer is entitled to a hearing before an administrative law judge. The administrative law judges who hear cases under Section 274A are in the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). If the administrative law judge finds the employer to have violated Section 274A, the employer has the right to an administrative appeal and the right to appeal a final DOJ order to a federal court of appeals.

Q. What penalties are provided for an employer who has violated Section 274A of the INA?

A: An employer who knowingly hires or continues the employment of an unauthorized alien is subject to a civil money penalty of between $375 and $3,200 for each unauthorized alien, for a first offense. Higher penalties apply for subsequent offenses. An employer who fails to properly complete, retain and/or make available for inspection Forms I-9 CNMI as required by law is subject to a civil money penalty of between $110 and $1,100 per violation. The proper amount of penalty within this range is determined by the adjudicating official. Please note that these same monetary penalties are also applicable to violations of anti-discrimination requirements of Section 274B of the INA. A "pattern or practice" (i.e., multiple violations over time) of knowing hire or continued employment violations by an employer, or fraud of any kind with respect to the Form I-9 CNMI by an employer or employee, may subject the violator to federal criminal prosecution.

Q. May I require my employees to indemnify me against liability under Section 274A of the INA?

A. No. An employer who is found to have required a bond or indemnity from an employee against liability under Section 274A may be required to pay a civil money penalty of $1,100 for each violation and to return any amounts received to the employee.

Q. Who is responsible for enforcing the anti-discrimination provisions of Section 274B of the INA?

A. The Office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC), a component of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, is responsible for enforcing Section 274B of the INA. Section 274B prohibits discrimination on the basis of citizenship status or national origin in the hiring, firing, recruitment or referral for employment for a fee. The section also prohibits discrimination in the inspection of documents establishing a person's work authorization under Section 274A, and retaliation against an individual for asserting rights protected under the anti-discrimination provision of the INA. For more information about the anti-discrimination provision of the INA, OSC or how to file a charge of discrimination with OSC, people can call OSC toll-free at 1-800-255-7688 (employee), 1-800-237-2515 (TDD) or 1-800-255-8155 (employer). Information can also be obtained by visiting OSC's Web site at http://www.justice.gov/crt/osc.

Q. Where can I get more information about my Form I-9 responsibilities as an employer or an employee?

A. Please see the USCIS Handbook for Employers (M-274) and other information available at the USCIS Web site, www.uscis.gov. Note that the M-274 provides general information about Form I-9 compliance in the United States and has not been updated at this time to include specific information about the Form

I-9 CNMI. The Form I-9 CNMI is a version of the Form I-9 intended specifically for use in the CNMI only. For information or guidance on compliance with the anti-discrimination requirements of Section 274B of the INA when completing the Form I-9 CNMI, employers should contact OSC at 1-800-255-8155 or visit OSC's Web site at www.usdoj.gov/crt/osc.

Q. Can I ask DHS to verify the employment authorization of my employees?

A. DHS cannot verify employment authorization upon request of an employer, except for those employers who participate in the E-Verify program. E-Verify is a voluntary program operated by USCIS in partnership with the Social Security Administration that verifies the employment authorization of all newly hired employees of participating employers.

Q. Is E-Verify available to employers in the CNMI?

A. Not yet. E-Verify currently cannot verify umbrella permits or other work authorization status originally granted by the CNMI government. CNMI employers should not enroll in E-Verify until further notice. USCIS hopes to make E-Verify available to CNMI employers in the future.

Source: USCIS

Business

Retail sales show gain in Feb.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Retail sales posted a surprising increase in February as consumers refused to let snowstorms stop them from stepping up purchases for everything from clothes to appliances. The improvement provided hope that the recovery from the Great Recession is gaining momentum.

Some economists cautioned that spending increases will remain modest as long as wages stay flat and job creation weak. But others said the fourth gain in retail sales in five months meant consumers are starting to spend with more confidence.

"This is more than a one-month wonder," said Stuart Hoffman, chief economist at PNC Financial in Pittsburgh. "This is telling us that consumers, who had been tightening their belts throughout the recession, have now loosened them a notch."

For February, sales rose 0.3 percent, the Commerce Department said Friday. That surpassed expectations of a 0.2 percent decline.

The overall gain was held back by a 2 percent decline in auto sales, partly reflecting the recall problems at Toyota. Weakness in autos also caused a downward revision in January retail sales. They were reduced to an increase of just 0.1 percent, down from the 0.5 percent originally reported.

But outside of autos, sales rose a strong 0.8 percent in February. That was far better than the 0.1 percent rise economists had expected. And for January, excluding autos, sales gained 0.5 percent, just slightly below the 0.6 percent initial estimate.

Examiner unveils Lehman accounting tricks

WASHINGTON (AP)—An accounting gimmick called Repo 105 provided financial relief for Lehman Brothers in the months before its spectacular collapse, an autopsy of the once-venerable Wall Street house has found. The question now is whether the trickery spells legal jeopardy for executives of Lehman or its auditors Ernst & Young.

The implosion of Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. into the biggest bankruptcy in U.S. history in September 2008 precipitated the financial meltdown that plunged the economy into the most severe recession since the 1930s. How did it happen?

After saddling itself with tens of billions of troubled assets that couldn't easily be sold, Lehman masked its debt and perilous financial condition by using the accounting artifice, an examiner appointed by the bankruptcy court found in a 2,200-page report on a year-long investigation.

The examiner, Anton Valukas, discovered that Lehman put together complex transactions that allowed the firm to sell "toxic," mostly mortgage, securities at the end of a quarter—wiping them off its balance sheet when regulators and shareholders were examining it—and then to quickly buy them back. Thus, the "Repo," meaning repurchase.

"It's a very damaging report and certainly is something that is going to be carefully scrutinized by federal prosecutors," said Robert Mintz, a former Justice Department prosecutor who is a private defense attorney.

Now, thanks to the work by Valukas, Repo 105 has entered the pantheon of names of vehicles for accounting chicanery, along with Enron's Jedi, Chewco and Raptor partnerships and the "Buco Nero" (black hole) offshore account stashed away by the fallen Italian dairy giant Parmalat. In the sagas of those two companies, the role of the accounting firms was central.

China's new generation picky about factory jobs

GUANGZHOU, China (AP)—Factory worker Chen Qinghai frowned as he looked at a tall bulletin board full of help-wanted notices from companies making everything from photocopiers and DVD drives to mobile phones and car parts.

The 19-year-old saw nothing that interested him.

"I wouldn't want to do any of these jobs," he said. "The pay is too low, and there's no chance of advancement. You'd just be stuck there."

Chen is part of the reason many factory bosses in southern China's Pearl River Delta—the nation's biggest manufacturing base—are complaining about a severe shortage of workers. Their anxiety runs particularly high at this time of year, because migrant workers have just spent a few weeks in their home provinces for the Lunar New Year and may not return to their jobs.

There are many reasons for the worker shortage in once-booming coastal regions like the Pearl River Delta. Farm-friendly policies are keeping many people on the land, while other migrants are finding jobs closer to home as poor interior provinces become more prosperous. Infrastructure projects funded by China's massive economic stimulus package have also attracted workers.

But another key reason is the changing labor force: More than half of China's working-age population is made up of laborers such as Chen, young people born in the 1980s and 1990s.

Their attitudes and expectations are vastly different from those of their parents, who hunkered down on assembly lines for little pay and helped turn China into a manufacturing juggernaut.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

China to bid on US high-speed rail projects

BEIJING (AP)—China plans to bid for contracts to build U.S. high-speed train lines and is stepping up exports of rail technology to Europe and Latin America, a government official said Saturday. China has built 4,000 miles (6,500 kilometers) of high-speed rail for its own train system and President Barack Obama issued a pledge in November with his Chinese counterpart, Hu Jintao, to cooperate in developing the technology. "We are organizing relevant companies to participate in bidding for U.S. high-speed railways," Wang Zhiguo, a deputy railways minister, told a news conference. Railway systems are planned in California, Florida and Illinois. Wang said state-owned Chinese companies already are building high-speed lines in Turkey and Venezuela.

FAA directs airlines to check tail flap of 737s

SEATTLE (AP)—The Federal Aviation Administration has issued an emergency airworthiness directive demanding that airlines check a mechanism that controls tail flaps on about 600 Boeing 737s. The directive was issued Friday and concerns flaps on the horizontal tails of the jets. On March 2, a Ryanair 737-800 en route from the Netherlands to Madrid, Spain, experienced severe vibrations in flight and had to make an unscheduled landing in Belgium. Inspection afterward found "extensive damage" to the left elevator, which is a movable flap on the horizontal tail that controls the pitch of the airplane, up or down. The agency says some of the jets must be inspected within 12 days, and the rest within 30 days. FAA spokesman Allen Kenitzer said about half the affected airplanes are operating in the U.S.

Nation

Native Hawaiian govt may become reality

HONOLULU (AP)—Their kingdom long ago overthrown, Native Hawaiians seeking redress are closer than they've ever been to reclaiming a piece of Hawaii.

Native Hawaiians are the last remaining indigenous group in the United States that hasn't been allowed to establish their own government, a right already extended to Alaska Natives and 564 Native American tribes.

With a final vote pending in the U.S. Senate and Hawaii-born President Barack Obama on their side, the nation's 400,000 Native Hawaiians could earn federal recognition as soon as this month—and the land, money and power that comes with it. The measure passed the U.S. House last month.

Many Native Hawaiians believe this process could help right the wrongs perpetuated since their kingdom was overthrown in 1893. The also point to the hundreds of thousands who died from diseases spread by foreign explorers before the kingdom fell.

Native Hawaiians never fully assimilated after the first Europeans arrived in 1778: They earn less money, live shorter lives, get sent to prison more often and are more likely to end up homeless than other ethnicities, said Clyde Namuo, CEO of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the state-funded agency founded to improve the conditions of Native Hawaiians.

"It's about correcting the injustice," Namuo said. "When you look very closely at the numbers—prison, health, wealth, education—we are not at the level that our colonizers are at."

Utah GOP leader resigns after hot tub confession

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Utah's House majority leader resigned from the Legislature Saturday, two days after acknowledging he paid a woman $150,000 to keep quiet about a nude hot-tubbing incident that took place a quarter century ago when she was a teenager.

Garn

Republican Rep. Kevin Garn's Thursday night confession came in a speech before House colleagues and stunned this conservative state. On Saturday, he apologized in an e-mail to House Speaker David Clark for becoming a distraction.

"After discussing this matter with my family, I have decided that it is in the best interests of them, my colleagues and the people of Utah," he wrote.

Garn, 55, acknowledged the indiscretion with the legal minor immediately after the Legislature adjourned for the session.

"Although we did not have any sexual contact, it was still clearly inappropriate—and it was my fault," he said from the House floor Thursday night.

Lawmakers responded with a standing ovation for his honesty and embraced him—a move some found offensive given the nature of what Garn was saying. In hindsight, the ovation may not have been the best move, but it shouldn't be misconstrued to indicate support for unethical behavior, Clark said Saturday.

Garn told colleagues he paid the woman, Cheryl Maher, after she began contacting reporters about the incident during his unsuccessful bid for a congressional seat in 2002. Despite a confidentiality agreement, the now 40-year-old Maher began contacting local news media last week to retell her story about being naked with Garn when she was 15, he said Thursday.

ACROSS THE NATION

Police: Woman in bust hid nearly $26,000 in bra

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP)—A fraud bust, indeed: Spokane County sheriff's deputies said a woman was hiding nearly $26,000 in her bra when she was booked into jail for investigation of theft. Lukeisha A. Harris was one of three Seattle-area residents arrested Friday as part of an alleged fraud ring. Deputies said they used phony Oregon driver's licenses and counterfeit credit cards to obtain cash advances from Spokane banks. Sheriff's spokesman Dave Reagan said the three were arrested after a worker at one bank reported that they tried to obtain money using a stolen credit card. The investigators followed the ring to two other banks before making the bust. Reagan said that during a search at the Spokane County Jail, guards found that the 24-year-old Harris—who is 6 feet tall and 400 pounds—had the cash hidden in her bra, along with bank receipts.

Ohio woman says Lexus sped up, caused Ind. crash

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (AP)—An Ohio woman says her Lexus careered through a parking lot and crashed into a light pole in Fort Wayne, Indiana, after its accelerator dropped to the floor. Myrna Cook was treated for a broken leg and other injuries Thursday. The 67-year-old from Paulding says she almost struck cars and pedestrians. A police report doesn't indicate how fast her car went, and police did not return a call for comment Saturday. Three spokesmen for Toyota Motor Corp., Lexus's maker, and a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration spokeswoman did not return calls. Toyota has issued recalls related to acceleration, braking and floor mats that could cause gas pedals to stick. Cook's car was the subject of a floor mat recall.

500 stranded on NJ Transit train for 5 hours

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)—Transit officials say 500 passengers have been stranded on a New Jersey Transit northbound train for more than five hours because of flooding on the tracks from a powerful storm. NJ Transit spokeswoman Penny Bassett Hackett says the New York-bound train became stuck before reaching the Rahway station along the Northeast Corridor line. She says emergency workers were unable to reach the train. She says police have boarded the train, and NJ Transit was to send a diesel engine to transport the commuters to the Rahway station, where busses would meet them. The storm also knocked out power to more than 165,000 customers across the state. In Atlantic City, a city police officer was injured when a crane collapsed at a casino construction site and sent debris flying.

Calif. man investigated over alleged DEA threats

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—A Northern California man arrested after park rangers allegedly spotted him waving a handgun at a national monument near the Oregon border will likely face more charges for threatening to kill federal agents and their families, authorities said Saturday. Micha Godfrey was arrested Thursday after park rangers at Lava Beds National Monument saw him acting suspicious and found that the convicted felon was carrying a revolver and wearing a bulletproof vest. The 37-year-old was charged Friday with being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition.

Asia

Kazakhstan flood deaths rise to 35

ALMATY, Kazakhstan (AP)—The death toll from a massive flood that devastated a village in southern Kazakhstan has soared to 35, the country's president said Saturday.

A privately owned dam at a reservoir in the eastern Almaty region neighboring China ruptured Thursday evening, unleashing torrents almost 2 meters (6.5 feet) high and completely destroying Kyzyl-Agash, a village of 3,000 people.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev said at a government meeting that the owner of the dam could face prosecution for failing to take adequate safety measures in preparation for the spring floods.

Nazarbayev also criticized the Emergency Services Ministry for failing to properly check on the safety of water supply facilities across the former Soviet Central Asian nation.

Authorities said more than 600 emergency workers have reached Kyzyl-Agash to help clear the debris and that police have been posted at the entrance to the village to prevent looting. Emergency Services Minister Vladimir Bozhko is leading an operation to assess the scale of the damage.

An onsite commission is assisting in organizing funerals and providing replacement documents for the surviving flood victims.

Suicide attack in Pakistan kills 13

SAIDU SHARIF, Pakistan (AP)—A renewed wave of violence struck Saturday in small-town Pakistan when a suicide bomber on a motorized rickshaw killed 13 people at a security checkpoint, raising fears the nation is sliding back into a period of relentless bloodletting.

The blast—the second major attack in Pakistan in less than 24 hours—occurred in the Swat Valley, where Taliban fighters battled government soldiers for months last year.

The attack in Saidu Sharif, Swat's administrative capital, also wounded 52 people. A day earlier, two suicide bombers killed 55 people in coordinated explosions in the eastern city of Lahore.

No one has claimed responsibility for either attack, but suspicion quickly fell on the loose network of Islamist insurgents who have been fighting the U.S.-allied Islamabad government and who have stepped up attacks against security forces in recent days.

BANGKOK PROTEST AP

Protestors from the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship dance to an early morning rock and roll song near the Democracy Monument in Bangkok, Thailand, Sunday, March 14, 2010. Thousand of red-shirted protestors gathered in Bangkok to demand the government return power to the people or face mass marches in key locations. The march is regarded by some as the last chance for ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to return to Thailand.

ASIAN BRIEFS

US statesman Kissinger out of Seoul hospital

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was released from a hospital in the South Korean capital Sunday after recovering from stomach pains, a hospital spokesman said. Kissinger's condition was "not serious" while he was being treated at Seoul's Severance Hospital and he had recovered after a day of medical treatment, spokesman Han Jin-ho said. Han said Kissinger didn't receive any major treatment like surgery, but didn't elaborate. A healthy-looking Kissinger thanked nurses and shook hands with them before leaving the hospital. He didn't speak to journalists waiting for him. The 86-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate arrived in Seoul earlier in the week to attend a security forum. He also met with South Korea's President Lee Myung-bak. Kissinger served as secretary of state for U.S. presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford.

Report: NKorea to rejoin nuclear talks in April

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea plans to head back to the bargaining table early next month for talks aimed at ending its nuclear weapons program, a news report said Saturday. The North, believed to have enough weaponized plutonium for at least a half-dozen bombs, quit international disarmament-for-aid negotiations and conducted a second nuclear test last year, drawing tightened U.N. sanctions. The North has said it will only return to the talks—which involve the U.S., South Korea, China, Russia and Japan—after the sanctions are lifted and it holds peace talks with the United States on formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War. The U.S. and South Korea have responded that the North must first return to the negotiating table and make progress on denuclearization.

Suicide attackers hit Afghan city; at least 30 die

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide squad detonated bombs at a newly fortified prison, police headquarters and two other locations late Saturday, killing at least 30 people in the largest city of the southern Taliban heartland. The prison was the main target, but no prisoners escaped, Afghan President Hamid Karzai's half-brother said. Ahmed Wali Karzai, a member of the Kandahar provincial council, said two of the explosions occurred near his home, which was not damaged. Wali Karzai told The Associated Press in a telephone interview that Canadian troops had reinforced the prison with cement block after a suicide attack in 2008 blew apart the prison gates and freed hundreds of criminals and suspected insurgents. One suicide attack struck at the front gate of the Kandahar police headquarters, causing a lot of casualties, he said.

World

Child abuse claims sweep Catholic Church in Europe

DUBLIN (AP)—It often starts as a voice in the wilderness, but can swell into an entire nation's demand for truth. From Ireland to Germany, Europe's many victims of child abuse in the Roman Catholic church are finally breaking social taboos and confronting the clergy to face its demons.

Ireland was the first in Europe to confront the church's worldwide custom of shielding pedophile priests from the law and public scandal. Now that legacy of suppressed childhood horror is being confronted in other parts of the Continent—nowhere more poignantly than in Germany, the homeland of Pope Benedict XVI.

The recent spread of claims into the Netherlands, Austria and Italy has analysts and churchmen wondering how deep the scandal runs, which nation will be affected next, and whether a tide of lawsuits will force European dioceses to declare bankruptcy like their American cousins.

"You have to presume that the cover-up of abuse exists everywhere, to one extent or another. A new case could appear in a new country tomorrow," said David Quinn, director of a Christian think tank, the Iona Institute, that seeks to promote family values in an Ireland increasingly cool to Catholicism.

Quinn noted that stories of systemic physical, sexual and emotional abuse circulated privately in Irish society for decades, but only moved aboveground in the mid-1990s when former altar boy Andrew Madden and orphanage survivor Christine Buckley went public with lawsuits and exposes of how priests and nuns tormented them with impunity.

Floodgates opened for Irish complaints that have topped 15,000 in this country of 4 million. Three government-ordered investigations have shocked and disgusted the nation, which has footed most of the bill to settle legal claims topping euro1 billion (nearly $1.5 billion).

Iraqi vote signals shift from religious leaders

BAGHDAD (AP)—Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's political coalition took an early vote lead Saturday in the election's all-important battleground of Baghdad, pulling away from its two closest rivals in the latest indication that Iraqis want a moderate government instead of Shiite religious hard-liners leading the postwar nation.

Partial results released by the Independent High Electoral Commission showed the State of Law coalition with about a 60,000-vote edge nationwide over its main moderate challenger, the secular Iraqiya coalition. The Shiite fundamentalist Iraqi National Alliance was in third place.

The partial Baghdad vote was released amid utter disarray in the election commission's headquarters, where the results were flashed on big-screen TVs but yanked down moments later, only to be released yet again. It was the latest in a series of blunders marring the counting process as results have trickled out slowly.

The chairman of the electoral commission, Faraj al-Haidari, said preliminary nationwide results could be released as early as Sunday—a full week after the vote for a 325-member parliament that will choose a prime minister to form a government that will lead the country as U.S. troops prepare to go home.

Allegations of fraud also have plagued the ballot tally.

Irish police free 4 in artist murder plot

DUBLIN (AP)—Four people, including an American woman, arrested over an alleged plot to assassinate Swedish artist Lars Vilks have been freed without charge, but three others remain in custody, Irish police said Saturday.

Seven people—three Algerians, a Libyan, a Palestinian and a Croatian and the American woman, who is married to one of the Algerians—were arrested Tuesday in Ireland hours before U.S. authorities unveiled a terror indictment against a 46-year-old Philadelphia woman, Colleen LaRose.

In Leadville, Colorado, a woman identified the American woman who was released as her daughter, 31-year-old Jamie Paulin-Ramirez. Christine Mott said she had been informed of Paulin-Ramirez's arrest by the FBI and other federal law enforcement agencies.

LaRose—who billed herself as "Jihad Jane" in a 2008 YouTube video—is accused of plotting with others to kill Vilks because of his 2007 sketch depicting the head of the Muslim prophet Muhammad on a dog's body. The drawing provoked al-Qaida in Iraq to offer a $100,000 bounty for the artist's slaying.

Al-Qaida suspect tricked Yemeni guard

SAN'A, Yemen (AP)—An American al-Qaida suspect detained in Yemen fooled his hospital guards into unshackling him by asking to join them for prayers, security officials said Saturday. He then killed a guard who laid down his weapon as he went ahead at prayer time.

The new details of Sharif Mobley's failed escape attempt, obtained by The Associated Press, indicate the 26-year-old American of Somali descent has a level of training and cunning characteristic of the terror network.

The story of a young American Muslim drawn to Yemen, ostensibly to study Arabic, has once again demonstrated the reach of the country's year-old al-Qaida offshoot, which was behind the Christmas Day attempt to blow up an airliner as it approached Detroit. The suspect in that attack, a young Nigerian Muslim, went to Yemen and used Arabic study as a cover, Yemeni authorities have said.

AP

This 2002 photo provided by Roman Castro shows Sharif Mobley, 26, at a barbecue in Buena, N.J.

Mobley had traveled to Yemen two years ago and was recently arrested there in a sweep that netted 10 other al-Qaida suspects.

Mobley made his bold escape attempt March 7 after being transferred from prison to a hospital in the capital, San'a, for medical treatment. He tried to shoot his way out of the hospital, killing one guard and seriously injuring another before being recaptured.

Health & Fitness

Vegetable questions, and more

By BARBARA QUINN
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD

Dear Barbara: I'm a senior and live alone. I try to eat properly, and like veggies. But you told me once that fresh vegetables lose their vitamins after three or four days in the fridge. If I buy fresh, I get a small amount but end up eating the same vegetable every day until it is gone. I can buy frozen organic and have a variety, without them spoiling, which makes it nice and more economical. But, am I getting the vitamins from the frozen?—Myrtle G.

Dear Myrtle: You may be getting more vitamins from frozen vegetables than you think. Nutritional value is at its peak right when vegetables are harvested. And that's when frozen vegetables get frozen. According to the

United States Department of Agriculture, the freezing process itself does not destroy nutrients. Fresh-picked vegetables are packed with nutrients, but quickly lose them (especially the water-soluble vitamins like vitamin C) if they are stored for any length of time.

Fresh is still best, especially if you eat veggies straight from your garden or a farmers market. But frozen vegetables have merit, too! Just remember not to cook them to death.

By the way, Myrtle, you can find a great list of recommended food storage times online from the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension: http://ces.ca.uky.edu/oldham-files/FN-SSB.085.pdf .

■ ■ ■

Dear Barbara: I have enjoyed your weekly column, and have learned a great deal. My question concerns calcium and vitamin D. I have heard that a person can only absorb 300 mgs. of calcium at a time and any more than that goes through your system without any benefit. Is this correct? And I understand there is a blood test to measure vitamin D levels. What is the "right" level on the blood test? Thanks for your help.—Gale S.

Dear Gale: In general, a person can absorb about 500 mgs. of calcium at a time, so best to take you calcium supplements in divided doses. (FYI, 1 cup (8 oz.) of milk contains about 300 mgs. and 100 IU vitamin D.)

As for blood tests to measure vitamin D, the 25-hydroxy (25-OH) vitamin D test is probably the most accurate measurement, according to the National Institutes of Health. The normal range for this test is 30 to 74 nanograms per milliliter (ng/mL), but these ³normals² may vary between labs. Ask your doctor to interpret your individual results.

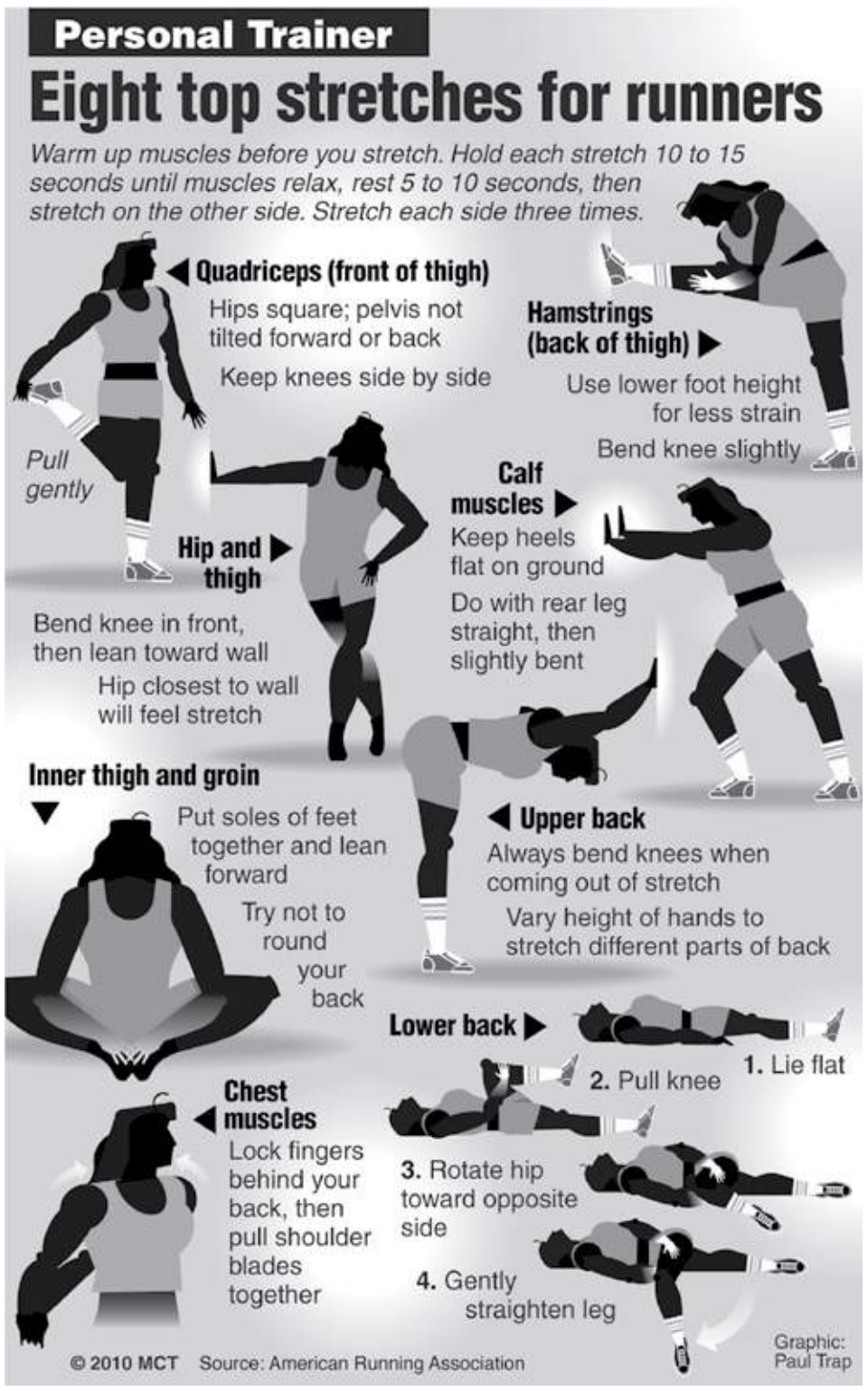
■ ■ ■

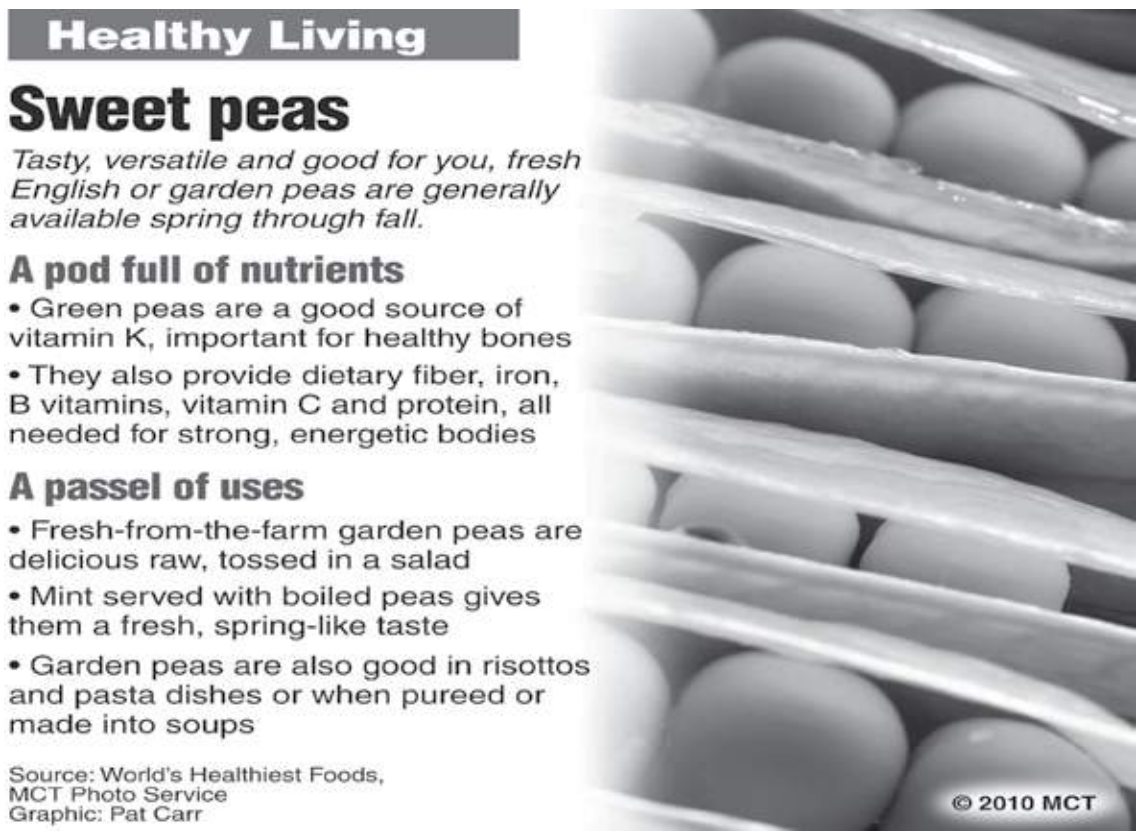
Dear Barbara: My doctor has a great sense of humor. After doing some minor surgery on my foot (that I happily slept through), he painted a four-leaf clover on my bandage and a smiley face on the bottom of my toe. How can I thank him and my wonderful friends for taking such good care of me as I recover? —Barbara Q.

Dear Barbara: You do indeed have a great doc and wonderful friends.

Perhaps you can thank them publicly, like in this column. Just a thought.

Barbara Quinn is a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator at the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. E-mail her at bquinn@chomp.org.


Personal Trainer
Eight top stretches for runners
Warm up muscles before you stretch. Hold each stretch 10 to 15 seconds until muscles relax, rest 5 to 10 seconds, then stretch on the other side. Stretch each side three times.
Quadriceps (front of thigh)
Hips square; pelvis not tilted forward or back
Keep knees side by side
Pull gently
Hamstrings (back of thigh)
Use lower foot height for less strain
Bend knee slightly
Hip and thigh
Bend knee in front, then lean toward wall
Hip closest to wall will feel stretch
Calf muscles
Keep heels flat on ground
Do with rear leg straight, then slightly bent
Inner thigh and groin
Put soles of feet together and lean forward
Try not to round your back
Upper back
Always bend knees when coming out of stretch
Vary height of hands to stretch different parts of back
Lower back
1. Lie flat
2. Pull knee
3. Rotate hip toward opposite side
4. Gently straighten leg
Chest muscles
Lock fingers behind your back, then pull shoulder blades together
© 2010 MCT
Source: American Running Association
Graphic: Paul Trap


Healthy Living
Sweet peas
Tasty, versatile and good for you, fresh English or garden peas are generally available spring through fall.
A pod full of nutrients
• Green peas are a good source of vitamin K, important for healthy bones
• They also provide dietary fiber, iron, B vitamins, vitamin C and protein, all needed for strong, energetic bodies
A passel of uses
• Fresh-from-the-farm garden peas are delicious raw, tossed in a salad
• Mint served with boiled peas gives them a fresh, spring-like taste
• Garden peas are also good in risottos and pasta dishes or when pureed or made into soups
Source: World's Healthiest Foods, MCT Photo Service
Graphic: Pat Carr
© 2010 MCT

Nutrition quiz: Toxins in food

By SAM MCMANIS
THE SACRAMENTO BEE

We depart from our usual calm and reasoned nutrition quiz for this alarmist, tabloid bleating: Your food can poison you! OK, stop hyperventilating and take our quiz.

1. Which toxin do apple seeds contain?
   a) arsenic
   b) cyanide
   c) hemlock

2. True or false: Chewing three or four seeds from a single apple is enough to be sickened.

3. Which of the following foods does not contain small levels of cyanide?
   a) cherries
   b) lima beans
   c) broccoli

4. According to the Web site HealthAliciousNess.com, "small amounts of cyanide may even be good for you by helping" which condition?
   a) kidney disease
   b) gout
   c) high blood pressure

5. Potatoes and tomatoes contain traces of glycoalkaloids, a poison that can affect which part of the body?
   a) stomach
   b) brain
   c) joints

ANSWERS: 1: b; 2: false (according to the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, a person would have to eat a "huge" number of seeds to suffer serious health consequences); 3: c; 4: c; 5: a

Sources: National Institutes of Health; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; www.healthaliciousness.com; U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

How to use hand sanitizers correctly

By ALISON JOHNSON
DAILY PRESS (NEWPORT NEWS, VA.)

Hand-sanitizing gels are a great option for killing germs when you're nowhere near a sink, but only if you follow these tips, doctors say:

■ **Check the alcohol content.** Buy a sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Otherwise, it won't be as good at killing viruses and bacteria.

■ **Use a good amount.** Aim for about seven grams, or a squirt that's roughly the size of a silver dollar. That should be enough to wet your entire hand—front and back—thoroughly. Since sanitizers will only kill germs on direct contact, make sure not to miss any spots.

■ **Rub it in well.** About 30 seconds of brisk hand-rubbing will give the gel time to soak into your skin. Don't touch anything else until your hands are completely dry. Note: if your hands have dried in 10 or 15 seconds, you haven't used enough sanitizer.

■ **Use moisturizer.** Too much sanitizer may dry out your skin and lead to rough patches or cracks. If you don't want to carry a separate tube of lotion, shop for sanitizers that include moisturizing ingredients such as aloe to keep skin healthier.

■ **Build up a stash.** Keep small bottles of sanitizer in your bag and car, as well as at home and work. Use it after touching especially germy surfaces such as doorknobs and other people's hands.

In general, don't think of hand sanitizer as a replacement for soap.

■ **Know when you need soap.** If your hands are visibly dirty or bleeding, washing with soap and water is a better option than sanitizers. If you're in contact with someone who has diarrhea, you also need soap to kill a common germ that causes the illness. In general, don't think of sanitizer as a replacement for soap.

Life & Style

Would you buy insurance from her? Apparently

By DAVID HILTBRAND
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

You might not recognize Stephanie Courtney even if you were riding in a cramped elevator with her. This despite the fact that she's on TV more than Neil Patrick Harris and Ellen DeGeneres combined.

That's because Courtney makes her innumerable appearances in the persona of Flo, the crazily congenial, unbelievably upbeat commercial icon for Progressive Auto Insurance.

Flo's look was sculpted for her debut TV spot in 2007. "It all comes from the talents of the hair and makeup ladies," Courtney says. "That first day my hair kept getting bigger and bigger. Suddenly I had bangs and heavy eye makeup. (The producers) said, 'Keep going. Keep going.' They wanted a retro look to go with the '60s Polynesian bungalow cocktail hour music."

After the mondo makeover, she still has to ladle on the attitude.

"I just channel the friendliest person I could imagine," says Courtney, who comes to the gig from an improv comedy background. "It's sort of like my mom to the 10th power. She's one of these ladies who is a perennial optimist."

"I love Flo. Flo makes me happy," says Bob Garfield, the ad critic at Advertising Age. "She is some weird postmodern Josephine the Plumber. She really cares about Progressive Insurance and she really cares about me. And that comes from the most cynical ad watcher on God's green earth."

Flo had better be appealing—her commercials are on in such heavy rotation. In fact, Flo and a certain lizard are pretty much propping up broadcasting.

"If Progressive and Geico ended," Garfield says, "we would have no television."

Another reason you see so much of this effervescent lady? It turns out she's a pretty effective sales tool.

"It's a very clever campaign," says Bill Cowen, professor and director of the PR program at Villanova University. "They've taken a concept like insurance, which is pretty much an intangible, and made it tangible. Flo is the shopkeeper helping you take the product off the shelf. Of course, you don't buy insurance in a box."

Chris Owens, the marketing business leader at Progressive who designed the campaign, says, "We wanted to show how easy it was to buy insurance and how Progressive was a great value. We decided to put a fun and energetic face on it, someone who had a great personality and was friendly with customers.

"Stephanie came to the audition and gave such an amazing performance, everyone looked at each other and said, 'She's our girl.'"

Courtney has taken a rather circuitous route to Madison Avenue's Hall of Fame. Move over, Mr. Whipple.

Growing up the youngest of three in Stony Point, N.Y., about 30 miles north of Manhattan, she was drawn to the stage.

"People say, 'What are your hobbies?' I say, 'I've been doing shows ever since I was a kid.' "

"When I left college," she says, "all I wanted to be was a musical theater chick. I auditioned tons. It just didn't pan out."

After a friend dared her to get up at a comedy club's open-mike night, Courtney had a new obsession. She moved to Los Angeles and enrolled in the training program for the Groundlings comedy troupe, working her way up to the 30-person main company in 2004.

Lots of laughs. No money. So she held down a variety of jobs, her fallback being catering. "Have tux, will serve crab cakes," she quips.

She landed sporadic acting jobs during this period.

"I was a switchboard operator on the first season of 'Mad Men,'" she says. "I was the oldest and bitterest. The cat glasses and the cigarettes. That was so fun."

Stephanie Courtney poses in the persona of Flo, the crazily congenial, unbelievably upbeat commercial icon for Progressive Auto Insurance.

She also had a recurring role on a short-lived ABC sitcom that was, mirabile scriptu, based on an insurance ad campaign.

"I was a boss on 'Cavemen,'" she says. "That was portentous."

Courtney also tried out for commercials, but was about to abandon those efforts in 2007.

"I landed about one a year," she says. "Just enough to make me question the gas money and all the driving in rush hour. When you audition for commercials, it's a lot of driving. What I netted wasn't exactly matching the hours I was putting in. I figured I'm not a face that makes people want to buy Lysol. Then I auditioned for Progressive."

She has now shot more than 30 TV spots as Flo. "Usually when they've covered everything in the script and there's still a little time left at the end," she says, "they'll say, 'Let's throw out some fun stuff.'"

That's when Courtney's musical theater training kicks in and she'll have Flo belt out a few lines.

"They all look at each other and say, 'Great. Let's try something else.'"

Authorities: Haim's name on illegal prescription

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The name of the late actor Corey Haim was found on a fraudulent prescription for a powerful painkiller that authorities said Friday was obtained through a major drug ring.

California Attorney General Jerry Brown's office said records of the prescription in the name of the former teen heartthrob were found during an investigation of the ring that illegally obtained prescription pads and used the stolen identities of doctors to fill them out.

"Corey Haim's death is yet another tragedy linked to the growing problem of prescription drug abuse," Brown said in a written statement. "This problem is increasingly linked to criminal organizations, like the illegal and massive prescription drug ring under investigation."

AP

This undated publicity image provided by A&E shows actor Corey Haim, who appeared in the A&E reality TV show "The Two Coreys" with his friend Corey Feldman.

Los Angeles County coroner's officials, however, said they have not yet determined what killed the 38-year-old Haim on Wednesday.

State law enforcement authorities said they were investigating the drug ring and how the name of Haim, who battled addiction for years, appeared on the prescription.

Javier Salaiz, an investigator with the state attorney general's office, said authorities have not yet confirmed that Haim actually filled the prescription or if someone was using his name to acquire the prescription.

However, a person familiar with the investigation who spoke on condition of anonymity because the case is ongoing said Haim may have been doctor shopping.

Assistant Chief Coroner Ed Winter said four prescription drug bottles bearing the actor's name were found in the apartment where he collapsed, but all those drugs had been provided by a doctor who had been treating the actor.

ABC, Lifetime among winners of GLAAD Media Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—Joy Behar, Cynthia Nixon and the ABC drama series "Brothers & Sisters" are among this year's recipients of media awards from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

Presented Saturday in New York, winners of the 21st Annual GLAAD Media Awards also include the NBC sitcom "Parks and Recreation," MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show," the Lifetime network film "Prayers for Bobby" and a report on CNN's "American Morning" program called "Why Will Won't Pledge Allegiance."

The ABC daytime drama "One Life to Live" and an episode of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" were also recognized, as were the Spanish-language networks Univision and Telemundo.

Among winners in nonelectronic media, The New York Times was awarded for overall outstanding newspaper coverage, and Detective Comics was named outstanding comic book.

"Sex and the City" star Nixon was honored with the Vito Russo Award, which is named after a founding member of GLAAD and is presented to a gay media professional who has made a significant difference in promoting equal rights for the gay community.

Behar, a co-host of ABC's "The View," received the Excellence in Media Award.

1ST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory of

Edward "Ed" Reyes Mendiola

We cordially invite all our relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the 1st Death Anniversary of our dearly beloved son, husband, father, brother.

Daily masses will be offered at San Antonio church at 6:00 p.m. starting Monday, March 08 – 15, 2010 except Sunday, March 14, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

A special mass intention will be celebrated on San Antonio church on Tuesday, March 16 at 6:00 p.m.

Dangukulo na Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Thank You Very Much.

Susana Reyes Mendiola (mother)
Mimi "Ivy" Del Rosario Mendiola (wife)
Children

‘American Idol’ pares down to 12 finalists

LOS ANGELES (AP)—And then there were 12 on “American Idol.”

After the audience voted, the singing contest said goodbye Thursday to Alex Lambert of North Richland Hills, Texas; Todrick Hall of Arlington, Texas; Lilly Scott of Littleton, Colo. and Katelyn Epperly of West Des Moines, Iowa.

It was no surprise that the judge’s favorite from previous weeks, Michael “Big Mike” Lynche, made the cut.

Lynche dazzled the judges with his performance of “This Woman’s Work” and made judge Kara DioGuardi dissolve into tears.

Lambert, who had trouble overcoming his shyness on stage, looked downcast when he learned his fate.

“There’s a lot of things America hasn’t seen me do yet,” he said, adding, “I wish could just have broken out of my shell.”

Judge Ellen DeGeneres gave him a verbal pat on the back.

“You’re so good. Don’t ever stop believing in yourself,” she told him.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the evening was the audience’s rejection of Scott. Before the decision was announced, host Ryan Seacrest stood with Scott and Katie Stevens on stage and asked the judges to weigh in on the fact that one of them would be heading home.

DioGuardi, who had championed both singers, said she found it striking that it came down to these two. She said Scott was someone who understood herself as an artist and Stevens was struggling to do that, but had the advantage of being more contemporary.

“I thought I did really well. I put my heart into every performance,” Scott said. “I just know there’s an audience out there for me.”

AP

In this March 10, 2010 photo released by Fox, contestant Michael Lynche performs in front of the judges on the singing competition series, “American Idol,” in Los Angeles.

Judge Randy Jackson liked Hall’s performance of “Somebody to Love,” while Cowell said it was a mixed performance.

“This has been an awesome experience. I came here to prove that I’m not just a dancer, I can also sing. I think that I’ve done that,” said the 24-year-old Hall.

He got some encouragement from Jackson, who said, “Fantastic, dude.”

DioGuardi criticized Epperly for “going through the motions” on her version of “I Feel the Earth Move” this week. Cowell compared her performance to request night at a restaurant, but added that he did like her full, curly locks that evoked the song’s composer, Carole King.

“I’m not stopping now. It’s just a push actually, for me. I’ll do more stuff,” Epperly said.

‘South Park’ begins 14th season by taking on Tiger

NEW YORK (AP)—Golf clubs in hands or not, the kids of “South Park” are ready to take on Tiger Woods.

Creators of the Comedy Central cartoon have long since proven that no subject is sacred to them. So for the opening of its 14th season on Wednesday, the troubled golfer encounters Stan, Kyle, Kenny and Cartman in their animated Colorado town.

“It’s such an important issue in America right now—the sex addiction outbreak,” Matt Stone, who makes the series with partner Trey Parker, said on Friday. “We’re all really concerned about him and hope he gets better.”

Sex addiction, the intersection of powerful men and willing women, late-night phone calls to the police and bad public relations gave them so much fodder they could have made an entire Tiger-centric season, Stone said.

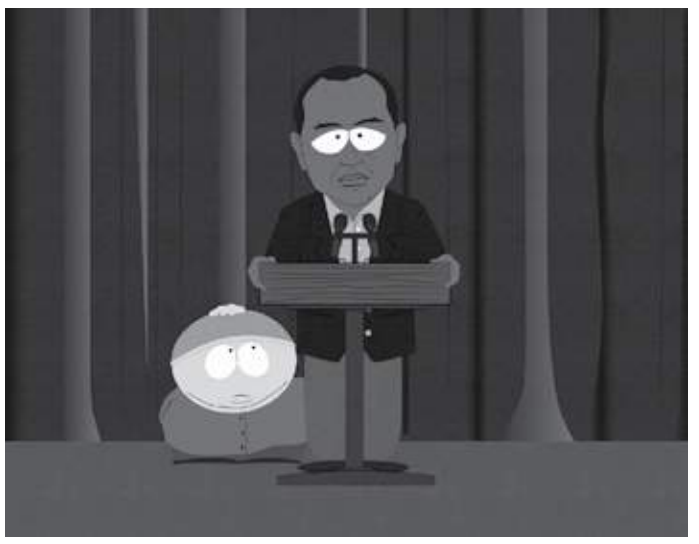
Since the Peabody Award-winning show’s first episode in 1997, Parker and Stone haven’t worried about lines between good taste and bad if they can get a laugh. They mocked the Church of Scientology to the point of annoying Tom Cruise, and depicted Jesus Christ defecating on President Bush and the American flag.

“There’s a delicacy in talking about (Woods) that we don’t have to worry about,” Stone said.

He wouldn’t give many details about the episode, in part because he and Parker were still writing it on Friday. Stone said he was fascinated and disgusted by Woods’ public apology, so it’s likely that will be worked in.

“South Park” is airing its 200th episode next month.

“We can’t even believe we’re still here doing this,” he said.



AP

In this publicity image released by Comedy Central/South Park Studios, Eric Cartman, left, and an animated version of golfer Tiger Woods are shown in a scene from the 14th season premiere of the animated series, “South Park,” airing Wednesday, March 17, at 10 p.m. on Comedy Central.

Disney to shut Zemeckis-run motion-capture studio

LOS ANGELES (AP)—To further cut costs at its movie studio, The Walt Disney Co. said Friday that it will shut a San Francisco-area facility used to capture the performance of Jim Carrey for his digitally animated character, Scrooge, in “A Christmas Carol.”

The closure of the facility in Marin County, north of San Francisco, will be completed by January and result in the loss of 450 jobs.

The facility was built by ImageMovers Digital, a company co-founded by “A Christmas Carol” director Robert Zemeckis and partially owned by Disney. Motion-capture technology in that facility was used to make the movie; Carrey wore sensors as he acted out scenes, and the data were used to recreate his character on the screen.

Before it closes, the complex will continue to be used by Zemeckis and his team to complete production of “Mars Needs Moms!,” a 3-D movie set for release in March 2011.

“Given today’s economic realities, we need to find alternative ways to bring creative content to audiences and IMD no longer fits into our business model,” Walt Disney Studios president Alan Bergman said.

In a statement, Zemeckis said he was “incredibly proud” of the ImageMovers team and the work it accomplished.

Disney said it hoped to come to a new long-term production deal with Zemeckis and his ImageMovers partners, Jack Rapke and Steve Starkey, including one for a future project called “Yellow Submarine.”

Disney’s studio has been paring costs and decreasing its movie slate, most recently putting a halt to “20,000 Leagues Under the Sea,” “Wedding Banned” and “Wild Hogs 2.”

The cuts have occurred since Rich Ross, formerly the head of Disney Channels Worldwide, took over the studio in October following the abrupt resignation of Dick Cook and more than a year of disappointing results.

Disney is also looking for a buyer of its Miramax Films division, which it bought from the Weinstein brothers in 1993. It shut down Miramax offices in January, and Disney CEO Bob Iger said last month that new investment in the unit would be limited to releasing its six remaining films through 2011.

Madonna offers relationship tips on ‘Marriage Ref’

By FRAZIER MOORE
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Madonna doesn’t think a wife should withhold sex from a sloppy husband.

But she believes a wife should dispose of her late husband’s prosthetic leg to spare the feelings of the wife’s current mate.

This was some of Madonna’s relationship advice on NBC’s “The Marriage Ref,” where she joined actor-comedians Larry David and Ricky Gervais as a guest panelist on Thursday’s edition.

The show invites its panel of “experts” to help analyze real-life disputes between married couples, mostly for laughs. Host Tom Papa, aka The Marriage Ref, makes the final call.

In one case, Mindy Goldman was offering sexual favors to Alan, her husband of 28 years, if he would clean up their messy basement.

A good idea? “I think it’s weird that she wants him to be clean so that they can be dirty,” cracked Madonna.

Gervais wondered, “Could they combine the sex with the housework?”

Then Susan and David Harper, married for three years, were seen in their house squabbling over possessions left over from their past relationships. Susan wanted her husband to get rid of the sofa where David and his ex-wife might have had hanky-panky, while David complained about Susan hanging on to the ashes and prosthetic leg of Don, her late husband.

Madonna’s swift solution: “He gets rid of the couch, she gets rid of the leg.”

“This is easily the most uncomfortable hour I’ve ever spent in my life,” sighed Larry David in the midst of the debate.

“Why?” Madonna retorted. “Because you’re sitting next to a woman who’s standing up to you?”

“The Marriage Ref,” which premiered last week, has Jerry Seinfeld as a creator and producer.

AP

This Dec. 15, 2009 file photo shows singer Madonna attending the premiere of “Nine” at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York.

Michael Jackson's custom-made furniture for sale

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The 22 pieces of custom-made furniture Michael Jackson commissioned for his London home are going on the auction block.

Darren Julien of Julien's Auctions says a gilded red velvet sofa that seats nine, a leopard-print chair trimmed with ostrich feathers and a pair of velvet armchairs embroidered with gold eagles are among the offerings.

Jackson intended to use the furnishings during his "This Is It" comeback concert run in London.

Fans can visit a re-creation of the home at Las Vegas' Planet Hollywood casino from June 14 to June 25 before the items are sold at auction.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit two charities: MusiCares, which provides health care and other services for struggling musicians, and Joshua's Heart, which aims to end world hunger.

This undated photo released by Colombostile shows a hand carved, gilt wood, three seat sofa topped with crown, upholstered in red velvet with metallic thread crown over double headed eagle embroidery.

AP

Strong ratings for Leno's return to late-night

In this March 7, 2010 file photo, Jay Leno arrives at the Vanity Fair Oscar party in West Hollywood, Calif.

AP

NEW YORK (AP)—After a smashing return, Jay Leno appears headed to a battle with David Letterman for late-night television supremacy.

The Nielsen Co. says Leno averaged 5.6 million viewers last week, his first back at NBC's "The Tonight Show" following the ill-fated prime time experiment. Letterman had 3.7 million at CBS. Leno took advantage of curiosity over his return and a strong lineup of guests, including Olympic stars and Sarah Palin. It was a half-million more than he averaged his last season at "Tonight."

It's been much closer the second week. Through four nights, Leno is averaging 4.3 million viewers and Letterman has 4 million.

Considering Leno usually beat Letterman by a million and a half during their last season of competition, that's a sign of erosion for NBC's late-night franchise. Letterman consistently beat Conan O'Brien after O'Brien took over last year.

No contest plea in case over star's stolen Rolex

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Prosecutors say a man has pleaded no contest to receiving a Rolex watch stolen from Orlando Bloom's house during a spate of celebrity burglaries.

Los Angeles County District Attorney's spokeswoman Jane Robison says Jonathan Ajar entered the no contest plea Friday and will be sentenced on April 15.

Ajar also pleaded no contest to being a felon in possession of a firearm in possession of cocaine with the intent to sell.

The 27-year-old remains jailed and could be sentenced to up to three years in state prison.

He has been linked to a group of six others charged with breaking into the homes of stars such as Bloom, Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan. Ajar was not charged with any of the burglaries, only receiving the watch that belonged to Bloom.

In this Jan. 23, 2010 file photo, Orlando Bloom attends the premiere of "Sympathy For Delicious" during the 2010 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

AP

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Dalai Lama doc wins Havel award at film festival

PRAGUE (AP) — A documentary by two Tibetan filmmakers tracing a year in the life of the Dalai Lama has won the Vaclav Havel award for its contribution to the protection of human rights. "The Sun Behind the Clouds" won the award at the 12th annual One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival on Friday. Directors Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam will receive the prize from the former Czech president in Prague on Thursday. The documentary follows the spiritual leader, whom Beijing accuses of seeking Tibetan independence from Chinese rule. China withdrew two movies from the Palm Springs International Film Festival in January to protest the film's screening there.

ABC's Kate Snow makes jump to NBC News

NEW YORK (AP)—ABC News reporter and "Good Morning America" weekend host Kate Snow is jumping to NBC News. NBC announced Friday that Snow will begin work as a "Dateline NBC" correspondent later this spring. Snow has been with ABC since 2003 and one of its weekend morning anchors since the show launched in 2004. She covered Hillary Rodham Clinton's presidential campaign, and was one of ABC's reporters in Haiti after the earthquake. Snow was a contender for the newsreader job on weekday "Good Morning America," but that role went to Juju Chang. ABC said Chang and Elizabeth Vargas will fill in for Snow this weekend. NBC News President Steve Capus called it "a great day for NBC News," and said Snow's hiring showed the network's commitment to growing its prime-time newsmagazine and investing in the future.

'Uncharted 2' nabs 5 trophies at video game awards

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—"Uncharted 2: Among Thieves" stole the show at the Game Developers Choice Awards. The high-octane PlayStation 3 action-adventure game developed by Naughty Dog won five trophies at the Game Developers Conference ceremony Thursday, including game of the year. "Uncharted 2," which casts players in the role of globe-trotting treasure hunter Nathan Drake, was also honored Thursday evening for best writing, audio, technology and visual art. "It"s one thing to have an idea," said art director Robh Ruppel, "but you really need a great crew to make a game." "Uncharted 2" foiled fellow game of the year nominees Rocksteady Studios' "Batman: Arkham Asylum," Ubisoft Montreal's "Assassin's Creed II," From Software's "Demon's Souls" and BioWare's "Dragon Age: Origins." The unstoppable PlayStation 3 exclusive previously nabbed three prizes at December's Spike TV Video Game Awards, including game of the year. Selected by a jury of game creators, the Game Developers Choice Awards honor the best games of the past year.

4 at Hong Kong broadcaster arrested in graft case

HONG KONG (AP)—The general manager of Hong Kong's leading broadcaster and three other employees have been arrested on corruption charges, including that two of them they accepted bribes, a station official said Friday. Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption said in a statement Thursday it had arrested four employees at a TV station and the director of an advertising production company in connection with corruption allegations. Broadcaster TVB's deputy controller for external affairs, Tsang Shing-ming, identified the suspects Friday as TVB General Manager Stephen Chan, its head of business development, a TV producer, one of its signed artists, and the general manager's former personal assistant, a non-TVB employee. The four TVB employees have been suspended, Tsang told The Associated Press. Chan's arrest was especially shocking in Hong Kong because he is the most public face of TVB, appearing at station events and hosting his own interview show that draws the city's top celebrities.

Aunt's 'organ recital' drowns out dinner table conversation

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Last night, I attended an elegant dinner party at the home of a friend. She served a delicious meal on a table set with crystal, bone china, silver and a low centerpiece of fresh flowers. Everything was perfection—with one exception. As soon as we were seated, our hostess's elderly Aunt "Ethel" began talking about her health, with graphic details of every symptom, every allergy and every pain she had ever endured.

Other guests tried changing the subject several times, but Aunt Ethel evidently believed she was being entertaining. Among those at the table were a lawyer, a teacher and a friend who had recently returned from living several years in Africa. Each had more to contribute in the way of conversation. But not one got the opportunity to speak more than a few words before Aunt Ethel was reminded of yet another ailment she "knew" we'd find interesting.

How does one handle an awkward situation like this? In spite of her age, the woman is essentially in good health and ours is a small town. She'll probably be present at many more dinners.

FRUSTRATED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEAR FRUSTRATED: (And I'm sure you were.) Your hostess lost control of her party. A way to have handled it would have been for her to say to Aunt Ethel, with a SMILE: "That's very interesting, Aunt Ethel, but I invited everyone to come here for a reason—so each person can tell us what they've been doing since we were last together, since I know a lot has been going on." Then she should have started around the table.

DEAR ABBY: When my husband, "Vic," and I met, we discussed having children. Although he is 25 years my senior, he was in accord with my desire to have kids. He even said we should have them right away because he is so much older.

I have had reproductive issues in the past, so before we married I went through several tests to verify that I could conceive a child. Three months after the wedding, Vic told me he had "changed his mind" and no longer wants a child. (He has one from a previous relationship.) When I told him how upset his decision made me, he said he would be "dying soon" and then I'll be able to have all the children I want.

I'm not sure where things should go from here. I feel Vic lied to me and never intended to have another child. Aside from this issue and a few others, he's a good husband. He would be there for me until one of us dies, but I don't know if I can settle for that. Vic refuses counseling, and when I told him I was going to go alone, he made me feel like it was the dumbest idea ever. Please help.

LONGS FOR MOTHERHOOD IN LOUISIANA

DEAR LONGS FOR MOTHERHOOD: You are asking yourself very important questions, and talking about the decisions you are facing with someone who is not emotionally involved isn't a dumb idea—it's an intelligent one. However, right now you have another issue that needs to be addressed. When your husband told you he would be dying soon, did you ask him exactly what he meant by that? If he was being literal, you may have your hands full for a while. And counseling to help you through that would be beneficial, too.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $12 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

DO YOU... I MEAN, DOES HOBBES WANT ANY TUNA FISH THIS WEEK?
NO, HOBBES STOPPED EATING CANNED TUNA. YOU KNOW, THEY KILL DOLPHINS TO GET IT.
OK, I'LL PUT IT BACK.
SO WHAT DOES HOBBES LIKE NOW INSTEAD?
FRESH SWORDFISH STEAKS. HE LIKES THEM GRILLED OUTSIDE.
MM-HMM. HOW ABOUT PEANUT BUTTER?
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3/15

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

GARFIELD, YOU LACK AMBITION...
AND PERSONALITY...
AND SELF-CONTROL, AND TACT, AND COMPASSION, AND..
WE MAY BE HERE FOR A WHILE
JIM DAVIS 3-15
www.garfield.com
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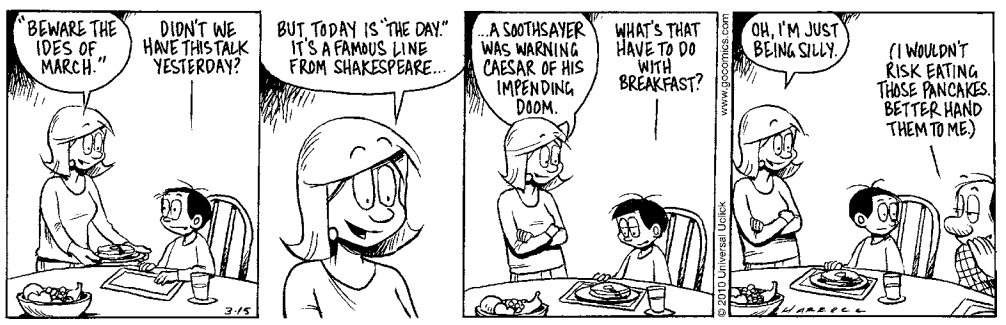
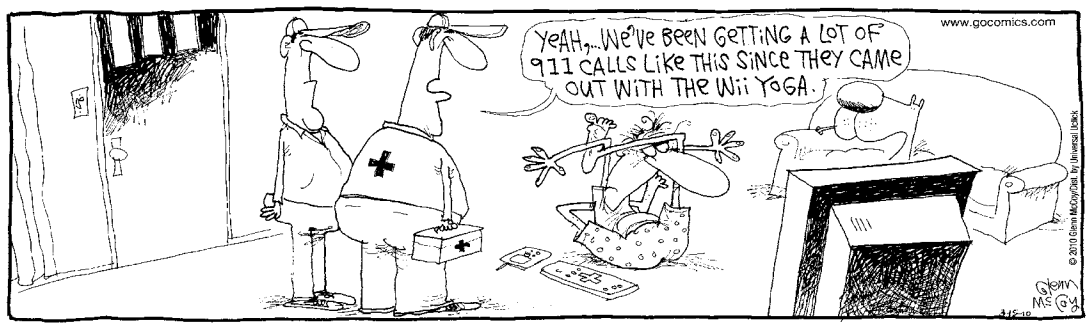
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


"BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH."
DIDN'T WE HAVE THIS TALK YESTERDAY?
BUT, TODAY IS "THE DAY." IT'S A FAMOUS LINE FROM SHAKESPEARE...
...A SOOTHSAYER WAS WARNING CAESAR OF HIS IMPENDING DOOM.
WHAT'S THAT HAVE TO DO WITH BREAKFAST?
OH, I'M JUST BEING SILLY.
(I WOULDN'T RISK EATING THOSE PANCAKES. BETTER HAND THEM TO ME.)
www.gocomics.com
© 2010 Universal Uclick
3-15

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


YEAH,...WE'VE BEEN GETTING A LOT OF 911 CALLS LIKE THIS SINCE THEY CAME OUT WITH THE Wii YOGA.
www.gocomics.com
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3-15-10

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Odds and —
5 Cigar residue
8 Campus hangout
12 Hawaiian volcano
14 — Minor (constellation)
15 Kathleen of the Obama cabinet
16 Hebrew month
17 Sternward
18 Unexpected
20 Winter garment
23 Dalmatian detail
24 Cause a surfeit
25 Ken of the Obama cabinet
28 — Aviv
29 Felonious monk in "The Da Vinci Code"
30 Ump
32 Hillary of the Obama cabinet
34 Scallopini meat
35 Rotate
36 Private journal
37 Sushi condiment
40 — -relief
41 Bottom of a boat
42 Timothy of the Obama cabinet
47 Needle case
48 Famous aria from "Carmen"
49 Spiritual discipline
50 Bath locale
51 Mormon state

DOWN
1 Type squares
2 Dundee denial
3 Fix the soundtrack
4 Furtive
5 Settled down
6 Old French coin
7 Knows what to do, maybe
8 Watch crystal, maybe
9 Language of Pakistan
10 Pronto, on a memo
11 Blowgun ammo
13 — Romeo (sports car)
19 Feathery neckwear
20 Portion (Abbr.)
21 Guinness or Baldwin
22 Hot dog holder
23 Chic shop
25 Be acceptable
26 Vicinity
27 Posterior
29 Cold-shoulder
31 Aviate
33 Roma's land
34 Hindu preserver god
36 Information
37 Curds' partner
38 Car
39 Hit hard
40 Lettuce variety
43 Water (Fr.)
44 Trawler need
45 Historic time
46 "Go, team!"

Solution time: 24 mins.

C	L	I	O	■	F	O	B	S	■	J	O	B
H	O	R	N	■	I	S	L	E	■	U	R	I
O	B	I	T	■	S	L	O	W	■	D	A	N
P	O	S	H	■	C	O	W	■	B	O	L	D
■	■	■	E	P	A	■	U	S	E	■	■	■
A	V	O	W	A	L	■	P	U	T	T	E	R
L	A	T	H	S	■	■	S	T	A	G	E	■
I	N	T	O	T	O	■	P	H	E	N	O	M
■	■	■	L	E	N	■	S	I	R	■	■	■
J	O	K	E	■	S	T	Y	■	H	E	R	D
A	N	A	■	D	I	S	C	■	A	S	I	A
I	C	Y	■	U	T	A	H	■	L	A	S	H
L	E	O	■	G	E	R	E	■	F	U	E	L

Saturday's answer 3-15

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				13				■	14			
15								■	16			
■	■	■	17			■	18	19				
20	21	22			■	23				■	■	■
24				■	25					26	27	■
28			■	29					■	30		31
■	32		33					■	34			
■	■	■	35				■	36				
37	38	39				■	40			■	■	■
41				■	42	43				44	45	46
47				■	48							
49				■	50			■	51			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Caitlin Wachs, 21; Kellan Lutz, 25; Sean Biggerstaff, 27; Eva Longoria Parker, 35

Happy Birthday: Your sensitivity will be tested this year. Concentrate on keeping things in perspective and maintaining balance by using moderation in all aspects of life. Change is upon you and, to make it favorable, you must move slowly toward your goals. Too much, too fast will lead to setbacks and failure. Your numbers are 5, 13, 17, 21, 24, 35, 46

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Nothing is as it appears. Revealing your plans will work against you. Keeping secrets will be necessary if you want to avoid trouble. Believe in yourself and your abilities and refuse to make a short-sighted decision. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Expect to be questioned about personal matters. You don't have to reveal secrets but you will have to explain what you are trying to accomplish. Use your energy wisely by fixing up your place or making changes to your environment. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Refuse to let anyone railroad you into taking on responsibilities that don't belong to you. Trust your instincts, not someone with big ideas and little backup. Romance is apparent but steer clear of anyone using pressure to get you to do something you don't care to do. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): An opening you've been waiting for will enable you to advance. Don't be afraid to speak up and let others know your intentions. Don't allow a personal responsibility to stand between you and your success. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Love and romance are in the stars but you mustn't mix business with pleasure or you will end up in a precarious position. A change in your location will lead to uncertainty, personally and professionally. Focus on what you have to offer and how you can get ahead. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Nurture any partnerships you are involved in. A couple of changes implemented now can ward off a problem in the future. A kind gesture and greater understanding will go a long way. Protect your health. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Being well-prepared and organized is your best bet. Now is not the time to take anything or anyone for granted. Don't limit what you can do because you have tied up your time with responsibilities that don't belong to you. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You are better positioned than you realize. Ask for what you want and go after your dreams. There is plenty of opportunity and good fortune heading your way. Travel will bring returns as well as pleasure. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Tread carefully. It will be easy to offend someone or to misrepresent your intentions. Someone will take you up on an offer you don't want to honor. Love is apparent but it can lead to trouble with relatives, friends or neighbors. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Your past experiences can help you make the right choices now. Don't be too predictable when dealing with others. Your ability to size up a situation and make it work will grab the attention of someone worth getting to know better. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Someone you used to know may try to convince you to pick up old habits or to get involved in something that isn't right for you. Don't live in the past. It's important to stick to your own game plan and to keep your guard up. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You'll be your own worst enemy. Taking on too much will amount to nothing. Pick and choose wisely. A serious approach to whatever you do will help to build confidence and keep you on track. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, caring and impulsive. You have a vivid imagination, you are a dreamer and you live in the moment.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	2	8			3			
4	1		9	5		3		
6						4	2	
	6		1					2
	5						7	
3					6		8	
	4	1						7
		6		1	5		9	4
			4			1	5	

Difficulty Level ★ 3/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

6	2	5	9	1	3	7	8	4
3	4	8	7	6	2	5	9	1
9	1	7	8	4	5	3	6	2
1	8	2	5	7	4	6	3	9
7	6	3	2	9	8	1	4	5
5	9	4	1	3	6	2	7	8
8	5	9	6	2	7	4	1	3
4	7	1	3	5	9	8	2	6
2	3	6	4	8	1	9	5	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 3/13

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PORTABLE WATER BOTTLES Solution: 6 letters

H	T	S	H	D	R	E	S	T	O	R	E	H	E	P
S	C	H	N	C	B	E	H	S	E	L	Z	Z	O	N
G	I	A	O	U	N	G	M	L	S	G	E	U	C	T
U	H	P	T	L	I	E	E	M	E	E	R	C	A	H
Z	F	E	P	T	D	W	U	M	U	A	N	I	P	G
Z	I	O	A	I	A	R	U	Q	P	S	K	T	P	I
L	H	L	U	T	N	L	S	S	G	T	S	S	E	E
E	S	Q	E	N	O	G	E	S	R	U	Y	A	D	W
E	I	R	W	V	T	G	W	E	(F)	(I)	(L)	(L)	L	H
L	N	E	P	O	A	A	F	L	O	O	C	P	I	G
C	E	T	D	R	L	R	I	S	P	O	C	K	E	T
Y	L	S	E	L	E	F	T	N	S	P	I	L	L	A
C	P	V	O	S	O	E	G	N	I	N	N	U	R	S
I	E	W	H	L	P	C	B	A	G	G	A	G	E	T
B	R	E	A	K	C	O	N	T	A	I	N	E	R	E

© 2010 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com 3/15

Attach, Baggage, Beverage, Bicycle, Break, Capped, Close, Cold, Container, Cool, Empty, Fill, Flow, Fountain, Glass, Grip, Gulp, Guzzle, Hand, Heat, Hiking, Hold, Leak, Liquid, Nozzle, Open, Pets, Plastic, Pocket, Pour, Quench, Refresh, Replenish, Restore, Running, Shape, Sipping, Spill, Squeeze, Summer, Swallow, Taste, Tight, Travel, Tube, Volume, Water, Weight, Wetness

Last Saturday's Answer: Marathon

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WHATZIT Solution: Pig(gy) in the middle

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Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax. (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 09-0183C
vs.	
JACQUELINE A. ATALIG, Defendant.	AMENDED SUMMONS

TO: THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT JACQUELINE A. ATALIG

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO APPEAR by the 21st day after the fourth date of publication of this AMENDED SUMMONS and defend the above entitled action in the CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, at the Office of Clerk of Court, CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, 1st Floor, Guma' Hustisia, Ilimwal Aweewe, House of Justice, Susupe Village, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan MP 96950-0307; and answer the complaint of the plaintiff Bank of Guam, and serve a copy of your answer upon **Robert Tenorio Torres**, attorney for Plaintiff Bank of Guam, at **Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya), P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950;** and in case of failure to do so, judgement will be rendered against you according to the demand of the COMPLAINT, which has been filed with the Clerk of Court.

So **ORDERED** this 4th day of March, 2010.

/s/ Clerk of Court

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 02-0382R
-V-.	
DAVID A. MANGLONA and NORMA A. MANGLONA, Defendants.	NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on January 21, 2010, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 345 R 379, containing an are of 929 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 345 R 09 dated September 25, 1984, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 84-2049.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, April 23, 2010, at the hour of 11:30 a.m., at The Courthouse, Sinapalo Village, Rota, Northern Marina Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 5th day of February 2010:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 02-2010

Opening date: March 9, 2010 **Closing date: March 23, 2010**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) announces the following job vacancies:

Position: **(1) Tinian Airport/Seaport Manager**
(1) General Maintenance-I (Tinian Seaport)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more that six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 26 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. Failure to provide any of the required documents may result in automatic disqualification. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening. The deadline for submission of applications is no later than **4:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 23, 2010**.

Tinian Airport/Seaport Manager: Any combination equivalent to graduation from high school (or G.E.D.) and a four (4) year degree from an accredited US college or university with no less than seven (7) years of progressively responsible experience in a US international airport and seaport operations of which four (4) years pertain to supervisory experience. Shall have no record of felony or criminal conviction.

General Maintenance-I (Tinian Seaport): Graduation from high school (or G.E.D.) with a certification of training in a related field. Shall have no record of criminal conviction.

Detailed information on qualifications and position description for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form during regular working hours at the CPA's Office (2nd Floor) of the Saipan International Airport, Arrival Wing, or may be downloaded by visiting CPA's website at www.cpa.gov.mp. For more information, please contact Ms. Addy C. Manahane by email at acmanahane@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670) 237-6500.

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/s/EDWARD M. DELEON-GUERRERO
Executive Director

rules 4-person
Tribune
FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
TUESDAY DECEMBER 15, 2009
XIX, Issue No. 299
Fitial eyes Cepeda's re-appointment to NMC board. PAGE
DPH to ask for extension of emergency declaration. PAGE
$1.35M earmarks for NMI now up for Obama's s
By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
The fate of the $1.35 million in CNMI
egate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP)
now rests with President Obama, after
the conference report on the omnibus
Fiscal Year 2010 spending bill cleared
the U.S. Senate on Sunday.
Sablan's request for $1.35 million to
fund seven programs and projects is con-
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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Smith scores 30 in Nuggets' win over Grizzlies

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—J.R. Smith scored 19 of his 30 points in the second half, rallying the Denver Nuggets to a 125-108 victory over the Memphis Grizzlies on Saturday night.

Smith was 11 of 16 from the field, including 7 for 10 on 3-pointers, to help the Nuggets win their sixth straight. Carmelo Anthony finished with 24 points and Chauncey Billups added 22 for Denver.

O.J. Mayo led Memphis with 25 points, while Zach Randolph had 22 points and 12 rebounds. Marc Gasol scored 17 points, Marcus Williams added 13 and Rudy Gay 12.

Denver trailed by 12 points in the first half, but scored 17 consecutive points bridging the third and fourth quarters to take a double-digit lead.

Memphis, which has a recent history of building large early leads, shot 65 percent in the first quarter, including 3 of 5 on 3s.

Memphis was still shooting better than 55 percent midway through the second, but Denver managed to stay close as Malik Allen, Chris Andersen and Smith provided energy off the bench. At that point, the Nugget reserves had outscored the starters.

Both teams would end up shooting well in the half—Memphis connecting on 56 percent, while the Nuggets hit 54 percent.

Memphis led by 12 in the first half and carried a 63-57 lead at the break as four starters were in double figures. Mayo had 15 points, while Randolph scored 13.

Anthony and Billups had 12 apiece, while Smith scored 11 for Denver.

Denver tied the score at 72 on Billups' three-point play as the Nuggets turned up their defensive pressure after halftime.

Anthony scored 10 points in the third and the teams were tied at 85 heading into the fourth quarter.

That was when the Nuggets pulled away with Smith leading the charge.

Denver took its first lead at the opening of the fourth behind a pair of dunks from Nene and a 3-pointer by Smith. That was part of 17 consecutive points bridging the third and the fourth quarters. Another 3-pointer from Smith extended the lead to 12.

Memphis never cut the advantage under double digits after that.

AP

Denver Nuggets guard J.R. Smith celebrates after he hit one of his seven three-point baskets during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Memphis Grizzlies, Saturday, March 13, 2010, in Memphis, Tenn.

Knicks 128, Mavericks 94

In Dallas, New York snapped Dallas' winning streak and avenged a 50-point loss to the Mavericks earlier in the season.

Bill Walker scored a career-high 23 points and Wilson Chandler added 22 for the Knicks, who'd lost nine straight in Dallas.

Dirk Nowitzki had 20 points and 12 rebounds for the Mavericks, who hadn't lost since Feb. 16.

The Knicks shot 56 percent from the field (50 for 89) and 16 of 30 from 3-point range.

Magic 109, Wizards 95

In Washington, Dwight Howard had 28 points and 15 rebounds as streaking Orlando wore down Washington.

Howard became a one-man show early in the second half, and he and Jameer Nelson made the alley-oop look routine as the Magic won their eighth straight game, the franchise's longest winning streak since April 2006.

Andray Blatche was Washington's one-man spotlight, scoring 32 points on 14-for-23 shooting as the Wizards lost their season-high seventh straight game.

Hawks 112, Pistons 99

In Atlanta, the hosts had their best shooting game of the season but Atlanta still had to hold off Detroit's late comeback.

The Hawks took a 28-point lead in the second quarter but suffered a second-half letdown as the Pistons closed within nine points with 6:45 remaining.

The Hawks answered with an 11-4 run to push the lead back to 16 points. Joe Johnson finished with 26 points.

Jason Maxiell led Detroit with 19 points and 12 rebounds.

Warriors 124, Raptors 112

In Oakland, California, Golden State put another dent in Toronto's sliding playoff hopes.

Stephen Curry had 35 points and 10 assists and Monta Ellis scored 31 in his second game back following a back injury.

Golden State set a season high with 16 3-pointers while snapping a six-game losing streak.

Jose Calderon had 24 points and 12 assists for the Raptors, who have lost eight of nine while seeing their lead over Chicago trimmed to 1 1/2 games for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Spurs 118, Clippers 88

In San Antonio, the hosts beat Los Angeles for the 16th straight time.

George Hill had 14 points and a career-high 11 assists and Matt Bonner scored 21 points on 8-for-9 shooting to lead the Spurs, who have the longest winning streak by one team against another.The Spurs, winners of six of seven, moved into sixth place in the Western Conference.

Baron Davis scored 18 of his team-high 22 points in the first half for the Clippers.

Rockets 116, Nets 108

In Houston, Luis Scola had a career-high 44 points and grabbed 12 rebounds to help Houston preserve its fading playoff hopes and beat lowly New Jersey.

Scola hit 20 of 25 shots, many of them open layups, and reached the highest point total by a Rockets player this season. Kevin Martin scored 20.

Courtney Lee scored 24 for the Nets, who finished a five-game road trip with four straight losses.

NBA expects Jordan approval as team owner in week

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (AP)—The NBA has signed off on Michael Jordan's bid to buy the Charlotte Bobcats, and commissioner David Stern expects the league's board of governors to approve the purchase by the end of next week.

In an interview with The Associated Press on Friday, Stern said he expects the vote to pass "very easily." Jordan will become the first former player to own an NBA team and the second black majority owner. He'll replace the first, Bob Johnson, who has lost tens of millions of dollars annually.

"He considers himself a North Carolina native and he's quite anxious to make this team into an important part of the community," Stern said. "I think he has the capacity and the will to do that. I think he's the right majority owner at the right time."

Stern said the league updated its background and financial checks on Jordan and found nothing to stop the deal. Stern said the six-time NBA champion is the sole investor in the ownership group for now, but expects him to try to find local partners.

Jordan is putting up all the cash in the deal, which is for $275 million, less than the $300 million Johnson paid for the expansion team that began play in 2004.

"I think it's fair to say he can afford it," Stern said.

The deal includes taking on more than $150 million in debt, covering future losses and putting millions more in capital to make improvements. The Bobcats are expected to lose about $30 million this season.

"There is going to be assumptions of debt, other obligations and infusions of cash to make sure the team can compete and continue this turnaround," Stern said.

Jordan has declined interview requests, saying through a team spokesman he'll speak once he's approved as owner.

The 47-year-old NBA superstar has been a part-owner of the Bobcats and has had the final say on all basketball decisions since 2006. It was a return home for Jordan, who grew up in Wilmington, and led the University of North Carolina to the U.S. college championship before winning five league MVP awards with the Chicago Bulls.

The deal means the end of a money-losing run for Johnson, the founder of Black Entertainment Television. The Bobcats have struggled to sell tickets and secure sponsorships since the NBA returned to Charlotte following the Hornets' departure to New Orleans in 2002.

"I have no doubt it can become successful again," Stern said, referring to NBA's presence in Charlotte. "And I think that given Michael's determination and his business skills, that the turnaround that has begun as a business matter will continue very much so. Not simply on his watch, but driven by him."

AP

In this April 2008 photo, Michael Jordan, front, sits with Charlotte Bobcats owner Bob Johnson while watching the Bobcats' NBA basketball game against the Philadelphia 76ers in Charlotte, N.C. Jordan struck a deal late Friday, Feb. 26, 2010, to buy a controlling interest in the Bobcats, making the NBA's greatest player the owner of the money-losing team in his home state.

South Africans tied at World Championship

DORAL, Florida (AP)—Charl Schwartzel finally has a chance to show off his game on a world stage. The next step is to take on Ernie Els, a familiar face from his native South Africa.

Schwartzel ran off four birdies in the opening six holes to catch up, then stayed in the game with three big par putts on the back nine for a 5-under 67 at Doral and a share of the lead with Els going into the final round of the CA Championship.

Els was in front for most of the sunny, blustery day on the Blue Monster until he started missing birdie opportunities. He had to settle for a 2-under 70 to join the 25-year-old Schwartzel at 12-under 204.

It will be an all-South African final pairing, three weeks after another WGC produced an all-England pairing in the final of the Match Play Championship.

Only this time, there are loads of other possibilities.

Padraig Harrington of Ireland, who had downplayed his chances most of the week, ran off four birdies on the back nine only to have his streak of 26 holes without a bogey end with a three-putt on the 18th. He still had a 67 and was one shot behind.

Robert Allenby, somehow, remains in the mix.

The Australian missed eight putts from inside 15 feet and was falling out of contention until two late birdies allowed him to salvage a 1-under 71, leaving him only two shots behind.

Bob Hope Classic champion Bill Haas nearly holed his final shot on the 18th for a tap-in birdie and a 70. He was three shots behind.

Defending champion Phil Mickelson failed to make up any ground with a 72, which put him eight shots behind. He suffered a stinger in his left elbow hitting off the firm turf on the 18th hole, and while he said it was tender, did not expect it to be a problem.

AP

Charl Schwartzel of South Africa, tees off on the second hole during the third round at the CA Championship golf tournament in Doral, Fla. Saturday, March 13, 2010.

Schwartzel is the least accomplished among the top four players, although he has one advantage—the recent experience of winning.

Els has not won on any of the major tours since the Honda Classic two years ago, and last year failed to win anywhere in the world for the first time since his first full year as a pro in 1990. Harrington hasn't won since his the 2008 PGA Championship at Oakland Hills.

Schwartzel, who stayed with Els last week after failing to qualify for the Honda Classic, qualified for this elite event by winning consecutive weeks in South Africa to move into the top 50 in the world.

He didn't win against a strong field. But he won.

"It doesn't matter what you win," Schwartzel said. "To win is difficult. You've still got to play all 72 holes and make that putt on the last hole. It gives you a lot of confidence to win. And as I sit here, I'm very positive. I feel like I can play with the best. And to me, that's a step in the right direction."

It's a big step for Els, too.

He won on the Blue Monster in 2002, when he took an eight-shot lead into the final round and survived a frenetic rally by Tiger Woods to win by two. Els now has a chance to join Woods as the only multiple winners of this WGC event, having won in Ireland when it was the American Express Championship in 2004.

Els showed so much confidence in his swing that he took his drive over the left bunkers on No. 5, about a 285-yard carry with the wind blowing across and slightly helping, which left him a flip wedge to a few week for birdie. That started a stretch of three birdies in four holes, only Schwartzel stayed with him.

Schwartzel tied him briefly three times on the front nine, but what kept the 25-year-old in the game was a series of pars on the back. He holed an 8-foot par putt on the 11th, and one from about the same distance on the 13th after a dreadful tee shot that was so far to the right that it clipped a tree and tumbled into the rough.

Then came the 14th, when his tee shot hung up in the shaggy collar of a bunker, forcing him to place his left foot on a mound and his right foot in the sand, no shot at reaching the green. He hit wedge to 18 feet and made that for par.

Els started missing short putts, which cost him a birdie on the par-5 12th and a par on the 13th when his 4-foot putt spun 270 degrees around the cup. He also missed from about 3 feet on the 16th, which played downwind and allowed most players to drive around the green.

Els is closing in on legendary status in South Africa, a three-time major champion who has played and won around the world. It can be intimidating for a young South African, although Schwartzel has been around him a long time.

How long?

"I've played golf with his dad. That's how far back we go," Els said earlier in the week, referring to a team event played when Schwartzel was barely walking.

Els has been touting him for years, and Schwartzel is just now starting to show what the hype was all about.

Unsigned Tomlinson goes home after visit with Jets

NEW YORK (AP)—LaDainian Tomlinson flew home to San Diego on Saturday to consider his options after spending a day with the New York Jets and leaving without a deal.

The free agent—the eighth-leading rusher in NFL history—was on a flight Saturday morning after his visit.

He arrived in New Jersey on Thursday night after meeting with the Minnesota Vikings and spent Friday touring the Jets' facility in Florham Park. He then had dinner with coach Rex Ryan, general manager Mike Tannenbaum and other team officials, who tried to persuade him to join an offense ranked No. 1 in rushing last season.

It was uncertain if Tomlinson would decide between the Jets and Vikings or visit other teams. He has not commented on his plans or visits with the Jets and Vikings.

Tomlinson, who has rushed for 12,490 career yards, will turn 31 in June and was released by the Chargers last month after his least productive season. He ran for 730 yards on 223 carries for an average of 3.3 yards per carry, all career lows. Tomlinson scored 12 touchdowns, but his role was reduced in an offense now geared toward Philip Rivers and the passing game.

He's still regarded as an excellent route runner and superb pass catcher, two qualities that make him attractive to New York and Minnesota.

Tomlinson had dinner with members of the Vikings on Wednesday night and spent the next day at the team's headquarters. He left with a purple Vikings jersey in hand, but pulled away in a black limousine without a deal and headed to New Jersey.

He had been scheduled to fly back to San Diego on Friday night, but changed his flight after arriving in New Jersey so late Thursday. The Jets extended their visit with him Friday to include dinner. There were also no late-night flights to the West Coast available Friday.

If he joins the Jets, Tomlinson would back up Shonn Greene, who emerged in his rookie season and made Thomas Jones expendable. Jones signed with Kansas City days earlier.

The Jets have quarterback Mark Sanchez returning for his second season along with a solid offensive line that helped New York to average a league-leading 172 yards on the ground per game. Tomlinson is also familiar with Jets offensive coordinator Brian Schottenheimer, who was the Chargers' quarterbacks coach from 2002-05.

Tomlinson could also be intrigued by the possibility of taking handoffs in Minnesota from Brett Favre, who's still mulling whether to return for a 20th season. He would back up Adrian Peterson and help replace Chester Taylor as the pass-catching threat out of the backfield. Taylor signed with Chicago last week.

Whether he chooses the Jets or Vikings, Tomlinson would not be the focal point of the offense, as he was for so many years with the Chargers - a role he has said he's OK with.

He was drafted with the fifth overall pick in 2001 out of TCU. He immediately became a star and helped transform the Chargers into perennial playoff contenders. His 138 career touchdowns rushing rank second in NFL history, and his 153 total touchdowns rank third.

After a heavy workload and a few injuries made him less effective in recent seasons—last season was his first under 1,000 yards—Tomlinson appears intent on winning a Super Bowl.

That's something the Vikings and Jets might be able to offer—both were a win shy of the NFL's big game last season. Minnesota lost to Super Bowl champion New Orleans 31-28 in overtime in the NFC championship, and New York fell to Indianapolis 30-17 in the AFC title game.

NFL BRIEFS

Larry Johnson signs 3-year deal with Redskins

WASHINGTON (AP)—Not content with just one aging, opinionated running back, the Washington Redskins added a second one Friday night when they signed Larry Johnson to a three-year, incentive-laden contract. Johnson agreed to a deal with a base value of $3.5 million, but he could make as much as $12 million if he meets certain incentives. Johnson joins Clinton Portis in what should make for an intriguing backfield dynamic under new coach Mike Shanahan. Johnson is 30, Portis is 28—although Portis' body has been battered by 50 percent more carries. Both have been to two Pro Bowls. Both need to show some sort of resurgence rather than a steady decline toward retirement. And both have been known to get in trouble for saying too much. Johnson ended his season with the Cincinnati Bengals after being released by the Kansas City Chiefs in November. His 6 1/2 years in Kansas City were marred by off-the-field problems, including two suspensions in his last 12 months with the team. The final straw came when he posted a gay slur on his Twitter account, insulted followers and questioned the competence of head coach Todd Haley.

Browns, Delhomme agree to 2-year deal

CLEVELAND (AP)—Jake Delhomme has a new NFL home, and the Cleveland Browns have another new quarterback. Delhomme, released last week by the Carolina Panthers, has agreed to terms on a two-year deal with the Browns, whose quarterback position has been nothing short of a merry-go-round of players since the club returned as an expansion team 11 years ago. Delhomme's agent, Rick Smith, said the 35-year-old QB would sign his contract before the club's off-season conditioning program begins. Smith refused to comment beyond saying Delhomme would be resuming his career in Cleveland. A team spokesman said the Browns have no announcements planned. Cleveland has been busy trying to resolve a troublesome position. Earlier this week, the Browns acquired backup Seneca Wallace and released Derek Anderson, a one-time Pro Bowl selection who has struggled in the past two seasons. Delhomme is expected to compete for Cleveland's starting job with Brady Quinn, who has yet to receive any endorsement from the club's new front office. Delhomme visited the Browns on Thursday but left without a deal. He had scheduled a meeting with the New Orleans Saints, his hometown team, but canceled that trip after working out the principles of a deal with the Browns. Since 1999, the Browns have had eight different opening-week quarterbacks. Delhomme is coming off his worst season as a pro. He threw 18 interceptions and the Panthers decided to cut him despite still owing him more than $12 million.

Shirley's snaps AON's winning streak

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Shirley's Coffee Shopfoiled AON/NJ Pro Plus' bid for a fourth straight win after nailing a 98-83 victory on Friday during their game in the 2nd Annual Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball League at the JP Center Basketball Court.

A second-quarter turnaround allowed Shirley's to end AON's winning run and in the process start the former's own winning streak. The host gained its second victory in a row and improved to a 4-2 slate.

Shirley's was still behind at the break, 40-45, when Errol Peredo, William Opone, and Junar Guiab teamed up in the host's comeback in the third period. The trio combined for 26 of Shirley's 30 points in the third canto with Peredo making 11 and Opone and Guiab adding eight and seven, respectively.

At the end of the third quarter, Shirley's was already on top, 70-59, and the host never looked back, as AON failed to neutralize Peredo, Opone, and Guiab in the final canto.

In the second game, Peter Mendiola sizzled for 35 points, lifting McGraw-Hill to an 85-72 triumph over Mobil.

Mendiola was consistent with his offense in the first half, drilling six and nine points in the opening and second quarter, respectively. He added 10 more points in the third as McGraw-Hill turned a 39-36 halftime lead to a 63-54 advantage.

Mendiola was not done yet, finishing the fourth quarter with 12 markers en route to McGraw-Hill's 13-point win and second victory in five games.

Three other McGraw-Hill players scored in double figures with Lawrence Buniag adding 14 and Jacob Villagomez and Walter Mendez chipping in 10 apiece.

Jun Estolas paced Mobil with 29 points and had only Manolo Manalo helping him out on offense with the latter contributing 24.

First Game

Shirleys's 98 – Peredo 28, Guiab 24, Sedillo 18, Opone 16, Nicdao 4, Mojar 4, Pineda 3.

AON 83 – De Guzman 29, Abuan 16, Catalla 11, Pantola 10, Capuyon 10, Manangan 7, De Dios 6, Delos Reyes 2.

Scoring by quarters: 17-19, 40-45, 70-59, 98-83.

Second Game

McGraw-Hill 85 – Mendiola 35, Buniag 14, Mendez 10, Villagomez 10, Cabrera 6, Diaz 4, Ada 2, Merar 2.

Mobil 72 – Estolas 29, Manalo 24, Jose 6, Ajoste 5, Galzote 4, Deocares 2, Wenceslao 2.

Scoring by quarters: 18-15, 39-36, 63-54. 85-72.

GARDNER

From Page 28

XTERRA Tour, came from a race in Hawaii.

Vine seemed headed for a good start when he came out of the water third behind Kai Saipan's Staal (15:10) and Andres Buitrago (16:48), timing in at 16:51. Gardner was seventh out of the water with a time of 17:58, but caught up with Vine at the halfway mark of the bike leg and never looked back from thereon. Gardner clocked 1:21:31 in the crash-free bike leg and 52:40 in the run race under the sweltering heat.

Switzerland's Renata Bucher also completed the race in one piece, clocking in at 2:58:19 to clinch her sixth straight women's title.

"I was lucky I was spared from those crashes. There were no bruises, no scratches, just a nice and safe race," said Bucher, who will again keep the No. 1 bib in next year's XTERRA Saipan.

As expected, Bucher was a bit slow in the swim leg, coming in at 14th place with her time of 19:13. The Swiss then grabbed the lead from American pro Shonny Vanlandingham at Navy Hill during the bike leg. Bucher submitted 1:33:48 and 1:03:34 in the bike and run splits, respectively to finish fourth overall and three notches up from her seventh-placed finish last year, but more than a minute behind his 2009 time of 2:56:55. Vanlandingham, who posted 20:28 in the swim part, 1:37:16 in bike leg and 1:07:02 in run part, ended up in second place in the women's division and seventh overall with her combined time of 3:07:04.

Saipan bet Mieko Carey was the first woman out of the water, timing in at 17:54, but could not sustain her lead after recording a 1:46:05 (third best in women's) in the bike leg and 1:05:06 in the run portion (third best in women's).

"I had two choices, race fast and crash or slow down and be safe. I chose to slow down," said Carey, who finished third in the women's division with a time of 03:11:07.

Carey's 2010 time was faster than the 3:44:56 she recorded last year when she crashed in the bike leg at Mt. Tapochao and sustained shallow cuts on her ribs.

Completing the Top 5 in the women's division were U.K.'s Emma Ruth Smith (3:14:47) and Darrelle Parker (3:39:23). In the men's division, rounding out the Top 6 were former champion Jason Chalker of Australia (2:48:19), Japan's Takahiro Ogasawara (2:57:46), and U.K's Michael Hiscott (3:06:20).

PACQUIAO

From Page 28

It wasn't as flashy as his knockout of Ricky Hatton or as savage as the beating he gave Oscar De La Hoya, but there was no doubt Pacquiao was in command the entire way against a fighter who kept his gloves up high in front of his face and chose to engage him only in spurts. Clottey's strategy worked to keep him upright, but he was never competitive in the biggest fight of his career.

"He's a very tough opponent," Pacquiao said. "He was looking for a big shot."

Pacquiao was supposed to have been fighting Floyd Mayweather Jr. instead of Clottey, but the megafight fell apart over a dispute over blood testing. He took out any frustrations over losing the biggest fight of his career by beating up Clottey on the biggest stage of his career.

"I want that fight, the world wants that fight, but it's up to him," Pacquiao said. "I'm ready to fight any time."

That time won't come soon. Mayweather is fighting Shane Mosley on May 1, and the earliest the two could get together would be in the fall and only if Mayweather backs off his demands for blood testing.

The fight this night was more of an event than a real competition, bringing in the biggest crowd in the U.S. for a fight since Julio Cesar Chavez fought Pernell Whitaker at the Alamodome in 1993. It paid off handsomely for Pacquiao, though, who earned at least $12 million and built on the reputation he has gained as one of the greatest fighters of his time.

Promoters not only sold out the 45,000 seats available for the bout, but added thousands more standing room only "party passes" for fans who could get a glimpse of the action and see every drop of sweat on the huge overhead screens.

"It's one of the most incredible stories not just in boxing but anywhere," promoter Bob Arum said. "Fourteen years ago he was sleeping in a cardboard shack in the Philippines and tonight he puts 51,000 people in this palace in Dallas."

The tone of the fight was set early, with Pacquiao advancing against his taller opponent and throwing punches with both hands from all angles. It was the same style that gave him spectacular wins in his last three fights and, though Clottey was clearly the bigger fighter, he fought back only sparingly.

"Everything's working now," trainer Freddie Roach told Pacquiao after the third round. "It's easy."

It was easy, too, much to the delight of the crowd and much to the delight of an entire country back in Pacquiao's homeland. There, traffic came to a halt and huge numbers of Filipinos, including army troops and allied American soldiers, jammed theatres in shopping malls and military camps nationwide to root for Pacquiao. In what has now become a familiar scene, Filipinos repeatedly yelled his name and threw punches in the air after the country's boxing hero was declared the winner.

Unlike most of Pacquiao's fights, this one lacked suspense from the opening seconds of the fight, when Clottey assumed the peek-a-boo position he would remain in except for brief spurts the entire bout.

"He has speed, I lost the fight," Clottey said. "He's fast, that's why I was taking my time."

Arum said he wasn't disappointed in the effort put out by Clottey, who was guaranteed to make at least $1.25 million.

LADY

From Page 28

The regulation ended in a 0-0 tie and neither team scored anew in the extra five minutes, forcing organizers to go to a shootout to decide the winner.

Crystal Garcia stepped first at the penalty box and missed the mark. However, Kagman goalie Gemma Lara committed a violation when she moved out of the line, giving Garcia another chance. Garcia faltered anew and Kagman's Dion Diaz hit next and suffered the same misfortune.

Jeneque Benavente made it a 1-0 count when she found the back of the net, but Ashley Hofschneider quickly tied the match, scoring in the next shootout. Jacque Wonenberg gave MHS back-to-back goals, but Kagman forced another deadlock when Wally tried to kick the ball out, but missed, allowing Alexis Hofschneider to score.

MHS' Elisa Fejeran muffed her kick in the next play, followed by another miss from Kagman's Remi Mafnas. Mafnas' kick had a better chance of going in than Fejeran's, but Wally's quick feet stepped in this time, kicking the ball out.

After a big defensive stop, Wally connected on offense, with her looper going over the head of Lara and going in, giving MHS a 3-2 lead.

Lara was next and also made a looper, but it went above the goal, handing the Lady Dolphins the championship.

Maria Ornes and Hazel Tudela coached the Lady Dolphins, who also had Quennalyn Itibus, Christina Rengiil, Vicky Kim, Maria Reyes, Krizelle Alforeza, Gilda Ogarro, Windy Orcine, and Kay Park as members.

CRASH

From Page 28

after completing their respective events.

One of the first "customers" at the medical tent was Mario Galang, who crashed in the bike leg in one of the coral roads at Navy Hill. He sustained bruises on his left knee that required bandages. Down and wounded, Galang still managed to complete the race and helped teammates Arlan Macasieb and Ronald Villafria finish first overall in the relay race of the Championship course.

The treacherous and slippery bike and trail run course did not spare pros, too as Aussie Jason Chalker and American Shonny Vanlandingham were treated by medical volunteers almost at the same time after crossing the finish line.

Chalker fell on the bike in one of the trails uphill and had deep cuts on his right upper arm near his armpit, requiring a few stitches. The Australian pro finished third behind United Kingdom's Sam Gardner and Canada's Mike Vine.

Vanlandingham sustained bruises and minor cuts, but was dehydrated so she spent several minutes resting at the tent and taking fluids before leaving the AMP.

The debuting Michael Hiscott of the United Kingdom had his taste of the risky and steep bike trails when he fell hard going down to one of the trails at the Mt. Tapochao area. Hiscott had his back on the wet and muddy trail and had his bike slammed on him.

However, the brave Hiscott quickly stood up and continued the race en route to a sixth place finish in the men's division. At the medical tent, Hiscott was treated for the long, but shallow cuts/bruises he had on his left butt. He sustained the same cuts on his left shoulder.

"It was a tough course and it was hard for me because it was my first time and I didn't have enough training before going here. Passing this type of course requires very good technical knowledge in biking," Hiscott said.

"But, given a chance, I will do this race again. It was fun," added Hiscott, who was more worried of his torn cycling shorts rather than the cuts he suffered.

"I have to buy a new one for next weekend's Tagaman," the 26-year-old triathete said.

Hiscott's compatriot, Emma Ruth Smith, also had to find a new gear, as her helmet broke after a minor catch.

"But still I was a bit luckier, no major damage, just slight bruises," said Smith, who came in fourth place in the women's pro.

XTERRA first-timer Jackie Van Dam was not as fortunate as Smith, as the former failed to complete the race after crashing in her bike in one of the coral roads at Navy Hill. Van Dam had to be driven back to AMP by passing motorists and was treated for cuts and bruises she sustained on both knees and left elbow. Van Dam later showed up at the awards ceremony for XTERRA Saipan Saturday night and though her knees and elbow were covered with bandage, she seemed all right.

A couple more bikers completed the race and left AMP with either their knees or elbows wrapped in bandage.

Emily Matson was not one of them as she reached AMP in style, walking to the transition area with her bike and its flat tires. Matson had flat tires at the Navy Hill trail after completing only one-third of the bike portion. However, instead of calling it quits, she soldiered on and managed to finish the race faster than two other participants in XTERRA Sport.

Matson was later recognized at the awards ceremony with race director Bill Sakovich handing her the "Most Courageous" award.

Before the Saturday race, it rained early morning, making the bike and run course slippery and the water a bit rough. However, more than 100 on and off-island triathletes braved the dangers of the race to be part of the XTERRA Saipan tradition.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	41	23	.641	—
Toronto	32	32	.500	9
Philadelphia	23	42	.354	18 1/2
New York	23	43	.348	19
New Jersey	7	59	.106	35

Southeast Division

Orlando	47	20	.701	—
Atlanta	42	23	.646	4
Charlotte	33	31	.516	12 1/2
Miami	34	32	.515	12 1/2
Washington	21	43	.328	24 1/2

Central Division

x-Cleveland	51	15	.773	—
Milwaukee	35	29	.547	15
Chicago	31	34	.477	19 1/2
Detroit	23	43	.348	28
Indiana	21	44	.323	29 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	45	22	.672	—
San Antonio	39	25	.609	4 1/2
Memphis	35	32	.522	10
Houston	33	31	.516	10 1/2
New Orleans	32	34	.485	12 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	45	21	.682	—
Utah	42	23	.646	2 1/2
Oklahoma City	40	24	.625	4
Portland	40	28	.588	6
Minnesota	14	52	.212	31

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	48	18	.727	—
Phoenix	40	26	.606	8
L.A. Clippers	25	42	.373	23 1/2
Sacramento	22	44	.333	26
Golden State	18	47	.277	29 1/2

x-clinched playoff spot

Yesterday's Games

Atlanta 112, Detroit 99
Orlando 109, Washington 95
Denver 125, Memphis 108
New York 128, Dallas 94
Houston 116, New Jersey 108
San Antonio 118, L.A. Clippers 88
Golden State 124, Toronto 112

LOCAL SCORES

SHIRLEY'S STANDINGS

MBI	6	0
World Resort	5	0
Aqua Resort	5	1
Fiesta Resort	5	1
Shirley's	4	2
AON/NJ Plus	3	3
Pacific Islands Club	3	2
Mobil	2	3
TBK	2	3
McGraw-Hill	2	3
Pepsi	1	3
Bank of Guam	1	3
Cell Pro	0	4
Docomo/SGH	0	5
Hard Rock	0	5

The Week in Sports

JV cage teams, runners shine

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Junior varsity basketball teams of Mt. Carmel School and Agape Christian School led the list of the week's top performers.

The Lady Knights escaped with a 29-28 victory in their title duel against Grace Christian Academy's Lady Eagles in the Coalition of Private School Sports Association Basketball League. The win avenged MCS loss to GCA in last season's girls JV finals.

In the boys JV finals, the debuting Agape Torchbearers also pulled off a close 43-42 victory over 2009 champion Saipan International School.

Also bringing home championships were long distance runners who competed in the 2010 Winter Festival of Runs and two groups of youth spikers.

In the marathon race of the Winter Festival of Runs, Japanese Masaharu Kijima and Mayu Mochizuki won in the men's and women's divisions. In the half marathon, Japanese runners also triumphed with Kennichi Yamaguchi and Mari Ozaki topping the men's and women's races. Saipan's own, Noriko Jim, ruled the 10K run for the second straight year, while Takeshi Aoyama prevailed in the men's division of the same race.

The 2010 Kids Marianas Cup was held the same weekend when runners were all over the island. The venue of the 4-person beach volleyball tournament was the Pacific Islands Club sand court with Fail and the Sons of the Beachers winning the U14 and U17 divisions, respectively. Fail was composed of Clay McCullough-Stearns, Jake Lee, Christian Miller, Ilia Corella, and Minori Yoshida, while Sons of the Beaches had Dae Min Jeon, C.J. Libut, Angelo Salas, Minsung Kim, and A.J. Batallones as members.

Still in the southern part of the island, Northern Mariana Islands Football Association kicked off the hostilities in the girls and boys U14 division of the spring league at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

NMIFA also started competitions in other age groups (U6, U8, U11, and U18) at the various fields on Saipan.

In athletics, the CNMI had four athletes leaving the island to compete in two tournaments. Yvette Bennett went to Qatar for the 2010 IAAF World Indoor Championships, while Reylyn Sapong, Lia Rangamar, and Ryan Ichihara traveled to Sydney, Australia for the 2010 Oceania Under 18 Area Championships.

After CNMI athletes left, the Commonwealth then started receiving visitors for the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championships. Among them were United Kingdom's Sam Gardner, Emma Ruth Smith and Michael Hiscott, Australia's Jason Chalker, Canada's Mike Vine, and Switzerland's Renata Bucher.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Fail's Jake Lee serves during their title game against Team Prodigy in the U14 division of the 2010 Kids Marianas Cup at the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
MP United-Blue, right, and MP United-White players battle for the ball in their U14 game during the opening of the NMIFA spring youth league at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Sons of the Beaches' Dae Min Jeon, right, goes for a return, while teammate C.J. Libut looks on during their title game against All-Stars in the U17 division of the 2010 Kids Marianas Cup at the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
From left, 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship participants Sam Gardner, Emma Ruth Smith, and Michael Hiscott pose for *Saipan Tribune* before a practice run at the trail at Anak's last week.

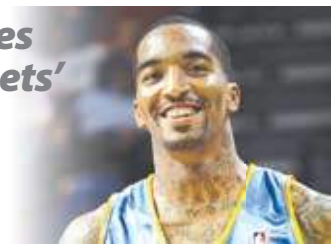
ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Left, Agape Christian School's James Lixing, left, pulls up for a shot against an SIS player during their title game in the private school caging last week at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Japanese Masaharu Kijima, left, and Mayu Mochizuki won the marathon race in the 2010 Winter Festival of Runs.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
From left, Ryan Ichihara, Yvette Bennett, Lia Rangamar, and Reylynn Sapong train at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field facility before leaving for off-island tournaments last week.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Members of the Mt. Carmel School's girls junior varsity team flash the No. 1 sign after beating Grace Christian Academy in the finals of the Coalition of Private School Sports Association Basketball League last week at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Smith scores 30 in Nuggets' win over Grizzlies
PAGE 24



Saipan Tribune
Sports

JV cage teams, runners shine
PAGE 27

Gardner repeats; 6th time for Bucher

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

United Kingdom's Sam Gardner repeated as champion in the men's pro division of the XTERRA Saipan Championship after a record-breaking performance in Saturday's race.

Gardner completed the 1.5-kilometer swim, 30-km mountain bike race, and 12-km trail run in three hours, 34 minutes, and three seconds, shattering the 3:34:32 mark he posted when he won the 2009 XTERRA Championship.

"It was sweeter the second time around. It was also tougher and harder, as Mike Vine came out more prepared this year. When you win for the first time and you have to defend the championship the next time, the pressure and the challenge are greater," Gardner said.

The native of Windsor, England crossed the finish line at the American Memorial Park 43 seconds ahead of Vine, who had his second straight bridesmaid finish this year. When Vine came in second place behind Gardner last year, he clocked in at 3:37:18, around three minutes behind the latter.

"What made this year's championship more special than last year was the way I won it. It is always nice to win a close race, especially against the athlete who came here more prepared than I am," said Gardner, who competed in his first major race of the 2010 season.

Before coming to Saipan, Vine, who won the inaugural Crown Jewel of

See GARDNER on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Sam Gardner, right, and Renata Bucher hoist the tape after crossing the finish line in the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship at the American Memorial Park on Saturday.

Crash, courage at XTERRA Saipan

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship would not be complete without the stories of triathletes crashing, but still recovering to finish Saturday's race.

Bruised, exhausted, and dehydrated, participants of the off-road race hobbled to the medical tent at the American Memorial Park right

See CRASH on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Jackie Van Dam, right, is assisted by a medical volunteer as the XTERRA Saipan participant had a crash in the bike leg in one of the coral roads at Navy Hill.

Pacquiao dominates Clottey for decision

By TIM DAHLBERG
AP BOXING WRITER

BOXING

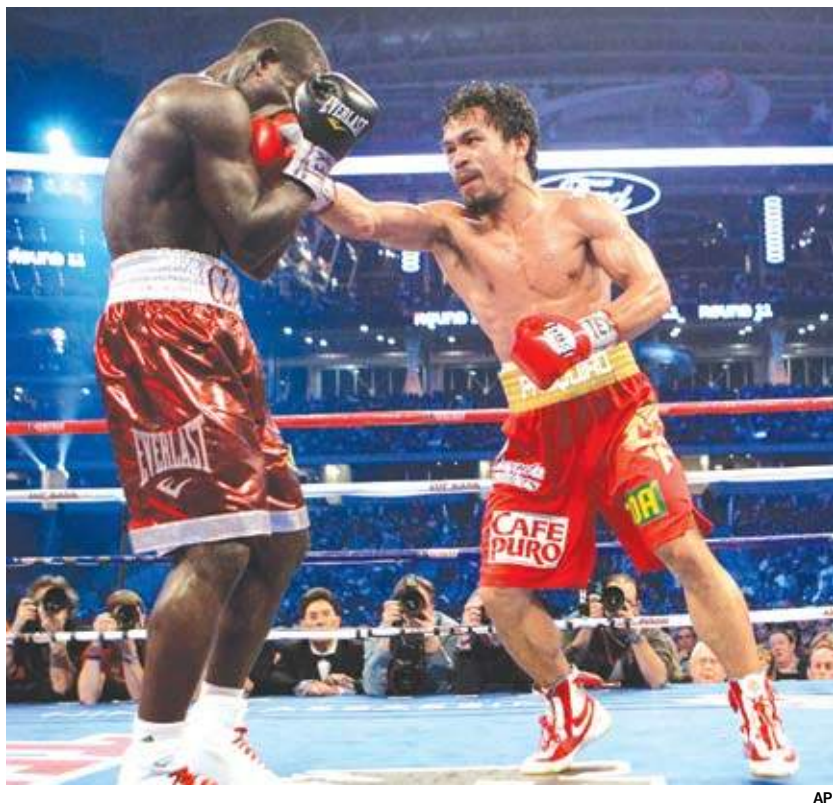
ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Fighting on the star, Manny Pacquiao showed once again why he is such a star.

With the biggest fight crowd in the U.S. in 17 years cheering him on at Cowboys Stadium, Pacquiao dominated a strangely passive Joshua Clottey from the opening bell Saturday night to retain his welterweight title and cement his status as the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world.

The fight wasn't close, and it was never in doubt. It was so one-sided that even those in the cheap seats among the crowd of 50,994 could tell without looking at the giant video screens over the ring that Pacquiao was in total command.

One ringside judge gave Pacquiao every round, while the two others gave him all but one. The Associated Press scored it a shutout for the Filipino sensation.

See PACQUIAO on Page 26



AP
Manny Pacquiao, right, of the Philippines, reaches out to hit Joshua Clottey, from Ghana, during their WBO boxing welterweight title fight in Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, Saturday, March 13, 2010.

Lady Dolphins rule MISO football league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Marianas High School clinched the championship in the 2009-2010 MISO Girls Football League after edging Kagman High School in the finals via a shootout, 3-2, on Friday night at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

MHS goalie Kimiko Wally made one defensive stop and then hit the game-winning goal to give the Lady Dolphins the championship.

See LADY on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The MHS Lady Dolphins pose with the championship trophy after beating Kagman High School, 3-2, in the finals of the MISO football league on Friday night at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.